

ZOO EMOTIONS: WHAT ANIMALS REALLY THINK

Reader's

digest

HOURS
OF
GREAT
READING



**LAUGHTER
IS THE
BEST
MEDICINE**



CHEATS

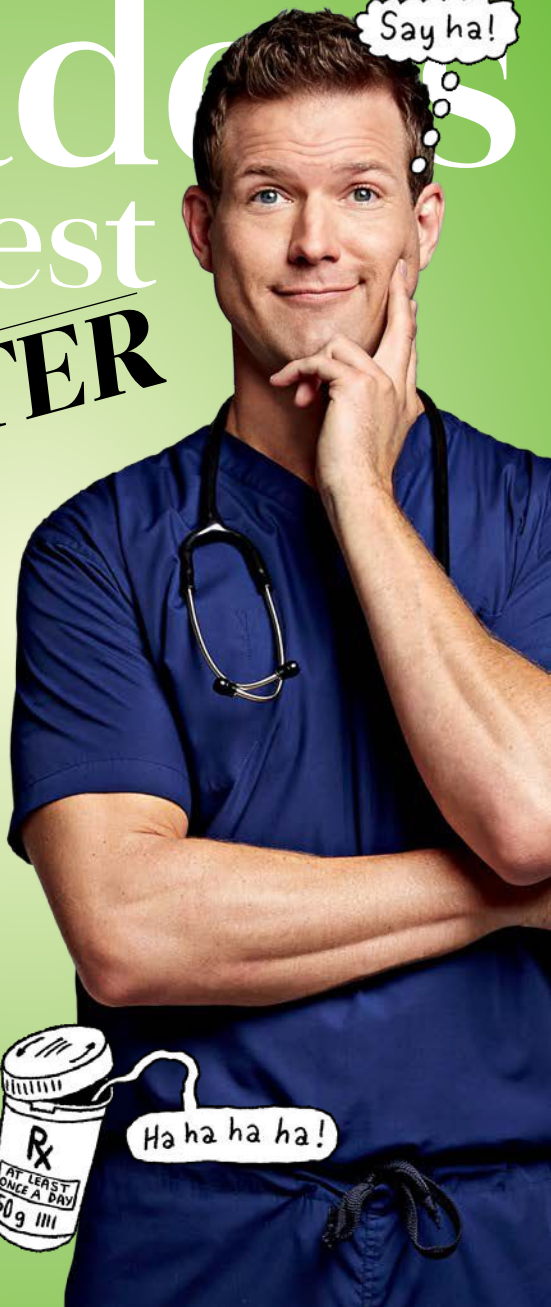
WHY GOOD PEOPLE BEND RULES

FACEBOOK DO'S & DON'TS

**YES! YOU CAN CONQUER
BACK PAIN**



Ha ha ha ha!



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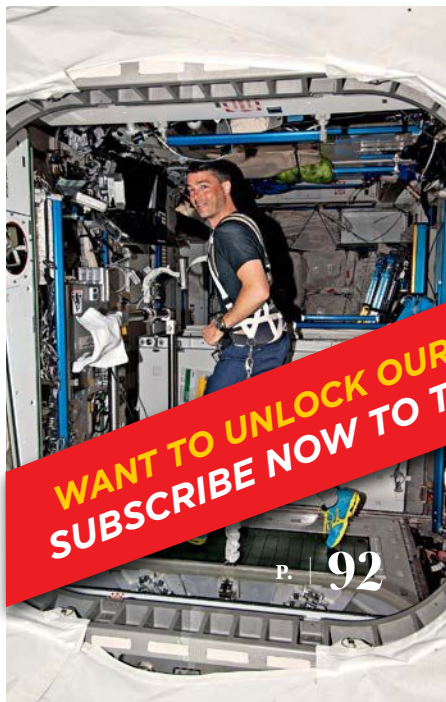
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They were in jail for 39 years for robbery and murder, but the witness whose testimony convicted them was hiding a shattering secret.

KYLE SWENSON FROM CLEVELAND SCENE



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Letters

READERS' COMMENTS AND OPINIONS

A Pet's Love

Lilly's story ("The Good Pit Bull", February) touched close to home. We have several rescue animals and they provide us with such love and joy. One of our cats had been languishing in a pound for five months before we adopted her and was underweight and depressed. Within days she was

playing like a kitten, and within weeks her coat had doubled in length and changed from dull charcoal to glossy black. Though not every pet is as literally lifesaving as Lilly, adopting an animal won't just save it from death row, it will make your life better, too.

JAMES P., via email



Embracing the Sun

I am not discounting harmful effects of the sun ("A Day in the Life of Your Skin", April), but I feel that there has been much damage caused by the media in propagating this fear. I am a prime example of the sun's powerful effects. When I became disabled, I stayed inside. But then, I decided to sunbathe outside, as I felt my nails were getting brittle. I've experienced enormous benefits. Practise sun safety, but don't avoid the sun altogether.

PIAN, via email

You're Being Watched

I had always ignored the pop-up ads on websites before reading "Every

Move you Make" (May). Now I've started observing the ads and I'm shocked that whatever the writer says is 100% true. I searched for some sneakers on online shopping websites recently and now I see the advertisements for those shoes along with their prices on every page I visit. It's creepy that the internet is tracking our every move and the common people are so unaware of it.

SARA FATIMA KHALIL, via email

LET US KNOW

If you are moved – or provoked – by any item in the magazine, share your thoughts. Turn to page 6 for how to join the discussion.

Building communication

I found "Lost Boy" (Subscriber Bonus, May) very interesting. Being autistic myself, I can say to anyone who says children like that just echo words and don't know what they mean: don't bet on that. I remember that just like Owen I echoed words – but knew precisely what they meant. And when I was a child I used words far more advanced than normal for my age. The hard part was getting anybody to listen. I still have that problem now at nearly 45. Yes, us autistic folks can and do have problems connecting, but it's not entirely one-sided. So don't just brush us off and say we don't know what we're talking about. It could just be that we do.

HARRY BOYES

Ed's note: "Lost Boy's" Suskind family has created a website for the Autistic Affinities Project: lifeanimated.net



CAPTION CONTEST

Come up with the funniest caption for the above photo and you could win cash. To enter, see details on page 6.



Food for thought

WE ASKED YOU TO THINK UP A FUNNY CAPTION FOR THIS PHOTO.

What Mr Tiddles lacked in breeding he more than made up for in personality.

AMANDA HUTCHINSON

Just because my name is Marmalade I think this is really going a bit too far.

JENNY COWNIE

Rye so serious?

ANN MCDONALD

Meanwhile at "The Lion King" auditions...

BLAIR PRESTON

Just loafing around

BILL WATSON

I wonder why the birds keep picking on me?

MEARA MAGSALAY-DOWNIE

I bread your pardon, my hat is purrrfect.

KIRSTY LEE via Facebook

I wanted a mane not grain!

CAROLYN GRAY via Facebook

Lacking a pedigree, Tiger found another way to show she belonged with the upper crust.

TANYA WICHT via Facebook

Congratulations to this month's winner, Ann McDonald.

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FOR DIGITAL EXTRAS AND
SOCIAL MEDIA LINKS, SEE PAGE 29.

Anecdotes and jokes

Send in your real-life laugh for
Life's Like That or All in a Day's
Work. Got a joke? Send it in for
Laughter is the Best Medicine!

Smart Animals

Share antics of unique pets or
wildlife in up to 300 words.

Kindness of Strangers

Share your moments of
generosity in 100-500 words.

My Story

Do you have an inspiring or
life-changing tale to tell?
Submissions must be true,
unpublished, original and
800-1000 words - see website
for more information.

Letters to the editor, caption competition and other reader submissions

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Editor's Note

Only When I Laugh

THERE'S SOMETHING about health and humour that makes a perfect duo. Maybe it's that our bodies and their intricate workings are so quirky and unfathomable, or perhaps it's a natural survival mechanism to laugh in the face of worry.

I noticed this recently when my husband was in hospital for a fairly major operation. The ward doctor asked if she could bring in a group of students less than 36 hours after the operation, which was just as the patient was getting to the point when he could speak lucidly again. It would be best if he didn't say too much, she explained, so the group could try to deduce what he'd been admitted for.

The students were nervous, we were exhausted, and it wasn't clear if any of this was going to be a good idea. They crowded around the bed staring at the groggy patient laced up to monitors and with bandages taped to his head. The atmosphere was earnest and, fair to say, tense.

Student to patient: When did you first notice any symptoms? Pause. Everyone leaned in waiting for a few words, a clue. They strained to hear. The patient thought about it and after a longer pause spoke:

"Ahhh ... this is just like an episode of *House*!"

The students did well, the patient got better, and his wife went back to work to edit this issue (which may explain why we've an extra special helping of funny true stories and jokes with a health focus).

Laughter really is the best medicine for any occasion. Take care.



Reading Time

This month our favourite stories took us around the world to talk to the animals, revisit memories, favourite fictions and jokes, and even into cyberspace ...



Dragon Lady: Daenerys Targaryen with her fiery friend

As an avid fan of *Game of Thrones*, I've read all George R.R. Martin's books and watch the HBO medieval fantasy series. I am also a huge admirer of Queen Elizabeth II, so was delighted to see a video clip of her visiting the set in Ireland last year ("Fantasy Island", page 38). She warily circled the Iron Throne – prickling with spikes and jagged edges – before deciding not to sit on it. With a Targaryen queen backed by three dragons staking her claim, it was probably a sensible decision.

MELANIE EGAN, deputy chief subeditor

PHOTO: (GIRAFFE) ROBIN SCHWARTZ
FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

I love animals, so it was a great pleasure to read “Hey Doc, Can You Hear Us?” (page 62). There are all sorts of debates surrounding zoos and other forms of keeping animals in captivity, but it’s good to see that Dr Virga is doing his best to see they’re treated properly.

TOM GOODWIN, copywriter



Carrying the burden of being wrongly accused of something is hard. First there’s the sense of helplessness, and then anger. Eventually most of us forget about it. But for Ricky Jackson, who was falsely accused of killing a man when he was 18, he was sent to prison and left to wait in hope that the truth would set him free. That wait took 39 years. His story (“Exonerated”, page 102) will stay with me for a long time.

LOUISE WATERSON, managing editor

When I was in my 20s I considered having a chain of forget-me-nots tattooed around my upper arm, (“Tattoo in Paris”, Subscriber Bonus). Fortunately, I held off. Just before my 40th birthday, I got a yogic mantra tattooed on my inner forearm, and every time I see it, it reminds me of my yoga training in India.

HANNAH HEMPENSTALL, subeditor

Metadata, privacy and the influence of the web is a controversial issue in my family. I’ll be helping them keep safe by handing out copies of “Instant Answers”, page 56 and page 96’s piece on cyber crooks.

GAIL MacCALLUM, subeditor

Quipped the great Henny Youngman, who virtually invented the one-liner: “I told the doctor I broke my leg in two places. He told me to quit going to those places.” As jokes go, it’s about as funny and as finely crafted as it gets. But for proof that real life can be far funnier than fiction, I adored this month’s humour special (“Laughter – the Best Medicine”, page 30). Medicos must see some horrors in their daily lives. It’s refreshing to glimpse a little of the hilarity too.

GREG BARTON, humour editor

Do you have a favourite story in this issue? Write to us: details on page 6.

Coincidences happen in the most unlikely places
leaving our readers amazed and amused

Crazy Coincidences

IN SEPTEMBER 2011, my husband Trevor and I took a wonderful tour of Canada and the US to celebrate my 60th birthday. We were in Banff, Canada on 2 September, the day of my actual birthday. Trevor and I had been to dinner with our friends Pauline and Jim, who were travelling with us, and we were walking back to our motel rooms when we heard some people ahead singing “Happy Birthday”.

We all thought it may be some of the others from our tour coach but couldn’t recognise any of the crowd there. I noticed a young, shy-looking blonde girl at the centre of attention and asked her if it was her birthday. “Yes, I’m 20 today,” she said. We had a good laugh and shared a birthday hug when I told her it was my birthday too.

From across the road came a dark-

haired woman who asked whose birthday it was. “Ours!” we replied. “Me too!” she cried. We shared a group hug and compared ages: the young girl was 20, the dark-haired woman was 40, while I had turned 60.

TRUDY ELZE

WHEN MY HUSBAND HEINZ and I decided to move to the South Coast of New South Wales from our home in the Australian Alps in 1981, we put our house on the market but couldn’t sell it. A quick sale would have allowed us to purchase the house with the great ocean views we were renting on the South Coast. But it was not to be – there were very few employment opportunities for us in the area, and by the time a buyer for our house was found, we both had jobs and a new home elsewhere.



In 1989, eight years after our original move, I received a phone call – our old house had been re-sold and it was the new owner asking for some information about the building. At the end of our conversation he told me that he had also purchased a holiday house on the South Coast and to our amazement it turned out to be the house we had been renting during the brief period we lived there.

ERIKA STEPANEK

WHEN I WAS 25, I attended a youth conference in the summer of 2008. I thought it would just be a refreshing weekend in the city. On the first day, I was a little nervous when the youth group went swimming. A burst appendix four years earlier had left me with a 12cm scar on my abdomen and I couldn't stand people staring at me and wondering what had happened. This was made worse knowing that a guy I'd met might see it.

Little did I know that he was nervous about swimming too. When he was 17 he had had a serious car accident and was left with a 15cm scar on his abdomen. Talk about an icebreaker. Almost identical scars and so much in common, it was meant to be. We have just celebrated our sixth wedding anniversary.

NADINE MOODY

MANY YEARS AGO, some friends invited my husband Allan and I to a dinner party in Hamilton, New



Zealand. There were two other couples there that we didn't know. At least, that's what I thought.

The man sitting opposite me introduced himself as Stephen and we started chatting. He soon started asking me questions about my childhood. He then asked what my maiden name had been. Stephen beamed when I told him – we had been childhood sweethearts! I was flabbergasted. As kids we used to go everywhere together. We lived just a few houses from each other in Richmond, England and used to rollerskate down the ramps to the underground garages. One day he gave me a very pretty ruby ring, (from a Christmas cracker!), and asked me to marry him. I said yes, of course.

When I was 11, we moved from London to Slough and I never heard from him, until that evening 30 years later.

TRISH BRIGHT

Do you have a coincidence story to share? We'd love to hear it. Find our contact details on page 6.

Unbelievable

TRUE TALES TOLD TALL



Getting into Aeroplane Mode

From runaway trains to running late for work... **Nury Vittachi** has a simple solution for nearly all of life's little inconveniences

WHY CAN'T THOSE genetic engineering people do USEFUL things like give kids "aeroplane mode" buttons on their foreheads? "Vibrate only" during scheduled hours would also be helpful. And if my wife is not reading this, can you kindly make a "Skip to the end and agree" button

appear somewhere whenever she starts on a long speech? Thank you.

I was thinking about air travel and technology after being told a recent true story about a pilot who was hand-cranking the propeller of his plane only to see the engine fire up and the empty aircraft take off

ILLUSTRATION: ANDREW JOYNER

without him. Nobody was hurt when the plane landed some hours later, probably because this happened in Canada, a country roughly the size of Jupiter, but with only about 100 inhabitants, mostly centenarian moose-herders.

Incidentally, the diametric opposite of Canada is Macau, which is so small and crowded that if you throw a glass of water out the window, 65 people will complain that their clothes got wet. And you don't need to use the ground floor lobby of central Macau hotels, you just crowd-surf through your guestroom window.

The report about the pilotless plane popped up in a conversation at an airport, but was topped by a 2013 tale of a Sri Lankan ghost train that travelled some 12 kilometres with no driver. *That* story was aced by the infamous tale of a mysterious train that went on a 45-kilometre journey from Bogor to Jakarta, Indonesia, many years earlier, with the empty drivers' cabin locked from the inside. I remember railway officials scoffing at the theory that a ghost had commandeered the train, preferring the more scientific line that a Hindu god had temporarily materialised in the cabin.

A frequent flyer in our group then told us about a Soviet fighter pilot in

1989 who thought his engine didn't sound right so he used his ejector seat to leave. The plane flew on for about 700km, crossing East Germany and then West Germany, separate states at the time. Air traffic controllers were asked to work out where it would land so that the place could be evacuated. They answered "Belgium". It's hard to

evacuate a whole country – unless it's Canada, in which case you can just put the entire population into a bus and send them along to a remote bar to spend the evening drinking Molson beer.

Despite these examples, I believe that travellers need not fear pilotless planes. A pilot once told me that big

passenger planes have so much technology now they can land themselves. I believe it. I bought a car recently and it's so hi-tech that the only people who can drive it are my children.

The truth is, technology is often poorly thought through. Take digital clocks. How am I supposed to stop pressing the snooze button if it doesn't give me an electric shock? Oh well; next time I'm late for work I'll blind my boss with technology: "Sorry I'm late; my head was in aeroplane mode."

Nury Vittachi is a Hong Kong-based author. Read his blog at Mrjam.org

“
***A pilot once
told me that
big passenger
planes can
now land
themselves.
I believe it***

After publishing her first book in her nineties, her life changed and so did many others

Attitude, Belief, Confidence

BY YVONNE HAMMOND

Yvonne Hammond, 92, is a mother of two, a grandmother of three and a great-grandmother of two. Now retired, Yvonne enjoys volunteering and researching family history.

IN APRIL 2014, I received the first printed copy of a book I had written titled *The Challenging Journey*. But little did I know, the publication of my story would open the next chapter of my life.

Initially written for the family, it was a warts-and-all story about my experience with my husband Don's 20-year battle with dementia. I wanted to give my family a fuller picture of the disease and teach them that awareness of even the subtlest changes is important to record. Although I had only intended to share my story with friends and family, a friend who had worked as a university professor for many years convinced me to release the book to the public.

On the week of the launch event, the local newspaper had published a story about my book and word began to spread. In addition to the 20 friends and family I was expecting, an extra 60 people from the community were there to celebrate. Word of the story continued to spread after the launch and soon I was being asked to discuss the book for newspaper, radio and online interviews.

What is happening? I thought to myself.

Shortly after the launch, a lady from Dementia Outreach invited me to share my story with a group of 20 or so. To my surprise – and pleasure – I found myself at ease speaking in front of people who had a genuine interest.



PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES

I had been doing around two presentations a month when I was invited by Dementia Outreach to be a guest speaker at the Aged Care Symposium in August. This time I responded with a confident yes and kept an eye out for the promised programme to arrive in the mail.

When it came I had quite a shock and had to reread the programme a few times. I had been invited to speak to a group of 170 doctors, professors and various health workers.

"I can't do this at my age," I told the

woman from Dementia Outreach over the phone, a rising panic in my voice.

"Of course, you can," she said. "It's the very reason we want you."

Although I still wasn't fully convinced, my son assured me that I would be fine and I decided to stick to my commitment. When I arrived, I was quite nervous but as my son had predicted, I was indeed "fine". As I walked up those stairs and onto the stage, I realised how honoured I was to share my story, and I began to relax.

I was amazed by the reception, and the sound of the audience's applause was ringing in my ears for hours after the speech. I was especially thrilled when, after hearing my presentation, the GNC Clinical Dementia organisation asked to use extracts from my book for an online health course in 2015.

A FEW YEARS PREVIOUSLY, when I was 85 and Don had been sick for some time, I had to undergo a

life-threatening open-heart operation, suffered a massive stroke and found myself on a subsequent rollercoaster of hope and despair. As I was recovering, I wrote a list called “Things I Am Grateful For”.

Beside each letter of the alphabet, I recorded all of the important (and not so important) things for which I was thankful. For example, next to “A” I had written “Alive”, as I was grateful to have survived. Although I vowed to live by my ABCs, I admit that as I got better and the difficulties of looking after Don got worse, I let them fall by the wayside.

I have revised this list since Don’s passing and now beside “A” I write “Attitude” and beside “B” I record the “Belief” that my brain is not just there

to fill space in my skull, but to give me “Confidence” and “Courage”. Sharing the ups and downs of our life together has led me to focus on the things I am grateful for and take the glass-half-full approach to life.

Telling my story allowed me to cast away negativity and gave me the courage to share my enthusiasm for the future, even at the ripe age of 92.

Despite the challenges of our final years together, I can now look back on our 63 years of marriage and remember Don as the smiling, singing man I married all those years ago.

Do you have a tale to tell? We'll pay cash for any original and unpublished story we print. See page 6 for details on how to contribute.



THE “SHOP PUN OF THE YEAR” AWARD

Small businesses in London, England, love serving up humour with a slice of cheese. The city is home to a barber shop dubbed “Jack the Clipper” and a wine and spirits store known as “Planet of the Grapes.”

When a retail data company held a public election last year to determine which boutique had the most “pun-derful” name, a secondhand shop “Junk and Disorderly” emerged victorious.

Runners-up included “Sofa So Good” (a furniture store), “World of Woolcraft” (a needlecraft shop), and “License 2 Fill” (a takeaway joint).

WWW.MENTALFLOSS.COM

THE DIGEST

HEALTH

DROP IT

Can You Eat Food 5 Seconds After it Falls on the Floor?

WHERE DID THE MYTH COME FROM?

You often hear people say it as they scoop some food they've just dropped up off the floor before popping it in their mouths. It's not entirely clear where the "rule" comes from, but it's so firmly entrenched in folklore that many believe it's a fact.

WHAT'S THE TRUTH?

Studies have shown that bacteria and viruses can contaminate food more or less instantaneously when it's dropped.

There was no difference in rates of contamination before food left for one or six seconds. However, after one minute, contamination rates are about ten times higher. Most bugs cause no

harm, but there are several nasty ones including norovirus, salmonella and *C. difficile* that can be tracked into the home on footwear and will quickly contaminate dropped food.

SO, SHOULD WE WORRY ABOUT IT, OR NOT?

The moisture levels and surface shape of the food have been found to affect how many bugs attach to it, as well as where it's dropped – high traffic areas have more bacteria and viruses than others. In general though, it's

a judgement call whether you want to eat something after it's been on the floor – just don't assume that if you rush to pick it up in under five seconds, it'll be safe.

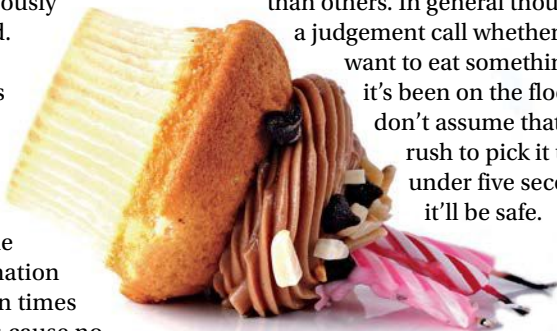


PHOTO: THINKSTOCK

HEALTHY HABIT

Fitting in Fitness

Do you find excuses not to exercise? Would you rather do anything else – even sort your socks or clean the oven? Here are a few ways to get you going

DO WHAT YOU LOVE The easiest way to sneak exercise into your life is to choose an activity you enjoy – one that doesn't feel like exercise, even though it is. Ask yourself: what am I good at? If you play to your strengths, you'll find fitness activities you can enjoy for years.

CHOOSE YOUR HOUR Studies have shown that people who work out in the morning are most likely to stick with a routine. By getting their exercise in before the day starts,

they skirt the last-minute scheduling conflicts and end-of-day blahs that thwart even the best intentions. But if you're not a morning person, choose whatever time works best for you. If you're in top form from noon to 1pm, aim for a lunchtime workout.

CALL IT BY ANOTHER NAME

Substitute any aerobically challenging household activity for the standard exercise routine. If it's something you have to do anyway – like washing the car or planting some

START HERE FOR A MODERATE AEROBIC WORK-OUT:

Brisk walking

Slow jogging

Cycling

Low-impact aerobics classes

Step class (with a low step)

Swimming

Power yoga

Swing dancing

Stair-climbing machine

Elliptical trainer





PHOTOS: GETTY IMAGES; THINKSTOCK

bushes in the yard – you'll achieve two goals at once.

DON'T SWEAT IT If a damp T-shirt is not your idea of a good time, try gentler forms of exercise such as yoga, tai chi, or Pilates, offered at many gyms.

PARTNER UP Exercise is more fun when you do it with a friend, and on days when your motivation is low, you're more likely to stick with the programme to avoid disappointing your exercise buddy. If your friends live far away, organise to buy matching fitness trackers, then compete on your tracker's website.



TO ICE OR NOT TO ICE?

Should you apply heat or ice for sports and other injuries? It depends. Here's a handy chart that explains which should be used and when:

ICE

- Sprain
- Strain
- Swelling
- Inflammation
- Pulled muscles after exercise
- Bruising
- Acute joint pain



HEAT

- Pain from over-use
- Repetitive tendon pain, before physical activity
- Tight or injured muscles, before exercise
- Repetitive strains
- Muscle spasms
- Chronic muscle pain
- Chronic joint pain

ICE & HEAT

- Sore muscles a day or two after exercise.

TRAIN WITH AN EXPERT A personal trainer will help you set goals, design a personalised fitness programme, and vary your routine to keep it challenging.

JOIN A CLUB Make fitness part of your social routine by joining a running, walking, hiking, biking, or tennis club.

NEWS FROM THE

World of Medicine

Hepatitis C Breakthrough

A newly FDA-approved treatment, Viekira Pak, could be a game changer for patients with hepatitis C, the most common cause of liver cancer and transplants. According to new research in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, an oral combination drug regimen suppressed hepatitis C in 97% of the 34 liver transplant patients studied. The new treatment is taken by patients for 24 weeks or less and has a higher success rate and a lower risk of organ rejection than other classic treatments.

When Chest Pain Isn't an Asthma Symptom

In a new ten-year study of nearly 7000 asthma patients with the average age of 62, those with cases severe enough to require daily medication were 60% more likely to have a heart attack, stroke or related condition than people with no asthma. Researchers don't know the exact link, and plan to next study the effect of daily asthma medication and chronic inflammation. Experts urge asthma patients

to seek prompt medical care if they experience any chest pain, as it is a common symptom of both asthma and heart disease.

Always Worth Mentioning

More than half of 1700 participants in a recent British study reported signs of a malignancy, such as unexplained coughing or bleeding, but were worried about wasting their GP's time. Patients ignored not only subtle signs like changed urination habits (a bladder cancer symptom) but also more obvious signs like lumps. Researchers say this shows that opportunities for early diagnosis are being missed and that patients need to see a doctor sooner when something is abnormal.

KELSEY KLOSS



AROMATHERAPY

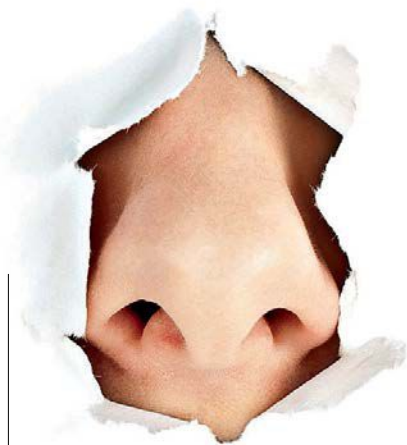
Sniff to Heal

BY KELSEY KLOSS

POOR SLEEP? In a study presented at the Eastern Psychological Association Conference in 2011, researchers analysed 20 people as they slept in rooms scented with jasmine, lavender, or nothing. Participants who smelled jasmine moved the least during sleep and rated their anxiety levels lowest. They also performed better on cognitive tests. Researchers say jasmine could help students or athletes who have trouble sleeping before a big test or game.

FEELING BLUE? In a Japanese study, researchers exposed 12 patients diagnosed with depression to a fragrant blend of citrus – consisting mostly of lemon oil – by circulating it in a room where they spent most of their time. The aroma regulated hormone levels, boosted immune function, and markedly lowered the dosages of anti-depressants the patients needed. For a natural pick-me-up, dab lemon balm on the inside of your wrist.

NEED HELP QUITTING? In a 2013 study published in the *Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine*, nicotine users took a



whiff of either black pepper oil or angelica oil and found cravings greatly decreased. Researchers suggest sniffing a drop of either (or mixed) oil on a cotton ball when cravings hit.

OVEREATING? In a US study, more than 3000 overweight people sniffed scents like banana and green apple when they felt hungry. On average, people with good olfactory ability lost weight over the six-month study without actively dieting. Certain odours trigger the release of hormones that give the perception of feeling full.

HAVING NIGHTMARES? In a German study, women who slept in a rose-scented room reported pleasant dreams, while those exposed to a rotten-egg smell were more likely to have negative ones. Experts say smell can affect our emotional responses, since pleasant smells like roses are often linked to happy memories.

WHAT'S NEW?

Fiddleheads

This spiralling delicacy is surprisingly versatile



LONG A SEASONAL staple of specialist food markets in North America, fiddleheads are the young, curled fronds of ferns, most commonly the ostrich fern (*Matteuccia struthiopteris*), but can also be harvested from many varieties of *Osmunda*, found around the world. If you've never tried them, imagine a flavour that is a cross between asparagus and broccoli.

Like other greens, these fern tips provide a treasure trove of nutrients, including fibre, niacin and vitamins A and C. They're also a good source of omega-3 fatty acids and possess significant antioxidant power, helping to stamp out free radicals. The best flavour comes from fiddleheads that are jade green and tightly coiled.

Harvesting fiddleheads is a popular option, but – as with all foraged foods – it's essential to identify the species and research it before you take a bite. If you're not certain, give it a miss.

TOP TIP

Swap fiddleheads for asparagus in pasta dishes, soups and salads, or serve them solo, steamed or blanched until tender.

Alter your diet to match the season

4 Healthy Foods to Get You Through Winter

BEETROOT

Benefits: Beetroot contains vitamins A, B, C, E, and K plus protein, dietary fibre, calcium, iron, and potassium. It's also high in betacyanin, which helps fight cancer, plus folate and betaine, which lowers the risk of heart disease.

How to eat it: Sauté the greens and serve them like spinach. Boil the beetroot unpeeled to retain the nutrients and add it to salad.

CABBAGE

Benefits: Green cabbage contains 80kJ and 33mg of vitamin C per cup. Red cabbage contains almost twice as much vitamin C as green, while green contains twice as much folate as the red. Cabbage helps prevent colon cancer, breast cancer and cancers of the uterus and ovaries.

How to eat it: Sauté then stir in stock and dill to make a soup, or toss shredded red cabbage, carrot, onion in a Thai peanut sauce.

CARROTS

Benefits: Carrots are our most abundant source of beta-carotene.

The more vivid the colour, the higher the level. Carrots can help reduce cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and vision problems.

How to eat it: Cooking carrots increases their nutritional value because it breaks down the tough cellular walls that encase the beta-carotene.

OKRA

Benefits: Okra contains high amounts of pectin, which helps decrease blood pressure and cholesterol, and regulate the bowels.

How to eat it: As it cooks, its fats are released, which thicken soups and stews. You can also pack in leftover pickle juice.



WALK THIS WAY

Traffic Lights Around the World

More than your average walking man, quirky traffic lights are entertaining pedestrians in all corners of the globe.

HOLLAND Beloved picturebook rabbit Miffy (see photo) makes sure pedestrians cross Lange Viestraat road crossings safely in Utrecht, the birthplace of her Dutch creator.

PORTUGAL Portuguese pedestrians can boogie alongside the dancing red man on pedestrian lights in Lisbon. His light is a pixelated representation of pedestrians busting a few moves to their chosen tunes in a nearby booth.

GERMANY While many of us settle for pressing the button constantly until the green man appears, you can fill time by playing a game of street-pong with someone on the other side of the street when you're in Hildesheim, Germany. To ensure you don't get too caught up in the



match, the game monitor will alert you when it's time to cross.

DENMARK Denmark has honoured author Hans Christian Andersen with a traffic light of a dapper gentleman with a cane and top hat to signal when it is safe for pedestrians to cross. Copenhagen crossings also encourage pedestrians to feel the love with heart-shaped traffic lights.

JAPAN Renowned for all things quirky, Japan is home to a few out-of-the-ordinary traffic lights. In an attempt to promote Yokohama's robotic industry and rebrand the area as "Robot Town", iconic Japanese Manga character Astro Boy was given his own traffic light. Introduced in 2014, the city concealed the location and encouraged residents and tourists to participate in a scavenger hunt to find the Astro Boy signal.

4 Common Resort Extras – and How to Avoid Them

Below are the most common holiday rip offs and how to make your trip less costly and more enjoyable.

AVOID THE CROWDS, SPEND LESS

If you're planning a trip to a popular area, schedule your holiday for less popular times of the year. You'll find the traffic, crowds and queues markedly reduced, and save a lot of money with the off-season rates.

WATCH OUT FOR "RESORT FEES"

Resort rates vary – some prices will include meals and activities, while for others these are additional. When you're shopping around for your hotel, make a list of all the things you want to do, and get an all-inclusive price for easy comparison.

DON'T GET OVERCHARGED FOR DRINKS

Don't fall for the waiter's "helpful" suggestions to order cocktails by the jug or try a special bottle of wine – you could be landed with a bigger bill than you expect. When asking for water, make it clear that you're looking for tap water, which should be free (check it's OK to drink), rather than bottled water, which can attract premium prices.

TO TIP OR NOT TO TIP? Certain countries do not traditionally tip. For example, in Australia you will not be expected to leave anything whereas in America you may be chased down the street if a tip is not left, the pursuer demanding to know why their service was not satisfactory. In Spain it is not a custom to tip, however, staff may expect something from tourists. Don't get caught out. Check before you travel and make sure you're not leaving too much, or too little.





Clever household hacks

7 Ways To Use Sugar (Besides Eat It)

BY TAYLOR SHEA

■ The carbohydrates in sugar provide nutrients to humans, animals, and plants. Add about 3 teaspoons of sugar and 2 tablespoons of white vinegar to a vase filled with water. The sugar will feed the flowers, while the vinegar will kill bacteria.

■ To clean coffee grinders, pour about a quarter cup of sugar into the grinder and let it grind for a few minutes, then empty.

■ To prevent biscuits from becoming stale, store in an airtight container with a handful of sugar cubes. This also works for bread, cake and cheese, and keeps empty thermoses fresh.

■ For brighter skin, mix a little sugar with lemon juice, a spoon of honey and some olive oil. Rub gently onto clean face or body, leave ten minutes then rinse with cold water. For an energising body scrub, blend equal amounts of freshly minced ginger with brown

sugar, then add sweet almond oil.

■ To get rid of grass stains, mix warm water with sugar until it forms a paste. Rub over the stain and let sit for an hour, then wash.

■ If working on your car left you with gunky hands, get the grease off by washing with a mixture of sugar and liquid hand soap.

■ Hands smell like onion or garlic after cooking? Pour 1 tablespoon of sugar in your palm, wet with 1 teaspoon of liquid soap, and rub your hands together. Rinse with water to reveal odour-free hands.



PETS

Domestic animals have an impact on the environment, too. Here are four things to consider



Carbon Pawprints

BY LISA BENDALL

1. THINK BEFORE YOU BUY

Every purchased factory-produced item negatively affects the planet, so it's best to buy necessities only. You should probably reconsider whether your cat really needs that fancy dress costume.

2. SIZE MATTERS

Larger animals – especially big dogs – eat and poop more, take up more living and car space, and use more supplies. That all translates into more pain for the environment. If possible, choose a little dog, or consider small pets like rabbits and fish instead.

3. WATCH WHAT THEY EAT

High-protein pet foods leave a large carbon footprint because of the fossil fuels required for their production.

Choose foods with plant proteins like soy, which are more energy-efficient than meat to produce, or secondary meat products that can't be sold as human food and would otherwise be thrown away (reputable companies will use only nutritious, quality parts). Save on packing and processing – and provide healthier options – by making pet treats yourself.

4. HOME IS BEST

Going on holiday? Instead of boarding your furry friend at a kennel, hire a sitter who will use your biodegradable poop bags, natural litter and shampoos free of phosphate and sulphate. If you do shell out for pet services, choose companies that follow a clear environmental policy.



Turning a negative
into a positive

Quirky Commute: The Freezeway

Forget the train and bus: one city in Canada has decided maybe it's time to stop complaining about the chilly weather and instead embrace their ice-filled winter streets by adding freezeways for ice-skating commuters.

With an average temperature of -10°C in the heart of winter, commuting in the Canadian city of Edmonton is not always a walk in the park. To solve this problem, landscape architect student Matthew Gibbs has suggested the Freezeway.

Essentially a road made of ice, the city is considering a plan to flood an 11km route to encourage residents to ice skate to work, school and other local attractions. Inspired by an offhand comment made in the 1990s by city councillor Tooker Gomberg to “crack the fire hydrants open, flood the streets, and let people skate to work in the winter”, Gibbs became determined to make this a reality.

*Winter a problem?
Canadians let it go and
take Frozen to a whole
new level*

Pitched at Edmonton's 2015 Winter Cities conference, the route would act as a walking and bike path in summer and the freezeway during winter. Gibbs says the long ice corridor would promote winter programming, active lifestyles, sustainable forms of transportation, and provide Edmonton with a much-needed tourist attraction.

The Freezeway idea has been supported by a number of Edmonton councillors and would mimic Ottawa's 8km Rideau Canal and Winnipeg's 9km The Forks on the Red River. Councillor Scott McKeen said that the Freezeway could be a great way to take advantage of one of Edmonton's greatest natural resources – winter.

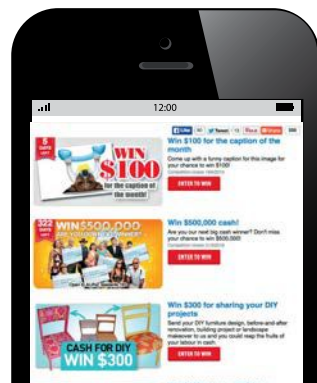
Not to mention, strapping on a pair of skates and zipping off to the office would have to be the best possible way to get to work!

JOIN THE CONVERSATION

Four great reasons why you should join us online...

We give away cash and prizes

Join fun competitions and quizzes



First look at future issues

Get a sneak peek at upcoming stories and covers



We give great advice

Get regular home, health and food tips from The Digest



*The most wasted of all days
is one without laughter*

E.E. CUMMINGS, poet



We help you get motivated

#QuotableQuotes and
#PointstoPonder to get you
through the day





LAUGHTER, — The Best — Medicine

Even at the doctor's office.

51 true stories and jokes about health and the people who make it happen

Scene: The operating room. I'm reviewing the surgical checklist with the nurses.

Me: We have the surgical equipment, the heart-lung machine, antibiotics, and the replacement heart valve on hand.

Patient: You wait until now to figure this stuff out?

DR MARC GILLINOV,

cardiac surgeon, the Cleveland Clinic

"Here," says the nurse, handing the patient a urine specimen container. "The bathroom's over there." A few minutes later, the patient comes out of the bathroom.

"Thanks," he says, returning the empty container. "But there was a toilet in there, so I didn't need this after all."

DR TRAVIS STORK, emergency

physician and host of *The Doctors*

PHOTOGRAPHED BY ROBERT TRACHTENBERG;
ILLUSTRATIONS BY PETER ARKLE

HUMOUR SPECIAL



*Dr Travis Stork, host of US TV
show The Doctors*



OVERHEARD IN THE DOCTOR'S OFFICE

I prescribed an inhaler for a patient's cat allergy. He came back a week later saying he was none the better. Turns out, he was spraying the inhaler on the cat.

Source: sunnyskyz.com

As I leaned in to check her eyes, my older patient got a little frisky.

"You remind me of my third husband," she said coyly.

"Third husband?" I asked. "How many have you had?"

"Two."

DR LEON PENDRACKY,
optometrist

My patient announced she had good news ... and bad. "The medicine for my earache worked," she said.

"What's the bad news?" I asked.

"It tasted awful."

Since she was feeling better, I didn't have the heart to tell her they're called eardrops for a reason.

DR MURRAY GROSSAN,
ENT-otolaryngologist

Patient: Doctor, I slipped in the grocery store and really hurt myself.

Me: Where did you get hurt?

Patient: Aisle six.

DR JOHN MUNSHOWER,
family medicine doctor

I gave my patient the results of her sleep study: "It looks like you stopped breathing in your sleep over 65 times per hour."

TEST YOUR MEDICAL VOCABULARY

Patients reported that they suffered from these ailments. Can you decipher what they meant and come up with the correct malady?

- 1) "Immaculate degeneration"
- 2) "Liza Minnelli"
- 3) "Smiling mighty Jesus"
- 4) "Fireballs of the universe"

Answers: 1) Macular degeneration; 2) Salmonella; 3) Spinal meningitis; 4) Fibroids of the uterus

Sources: overheardintheface.com; notalwayright.com; reader Evelyn Rosemore, Plano, Texas; Scrubs magazine

Her response: "Did I start back?"

DR MICHAEL BREUS, *sleep medicine expert*

During surgery, my fellow resident bumped heads with the surgeon.

"Ah, Dr Jones, a meeting of the minds," he said, laughing it off.

The surgeon mumbled, "Yes. And I felt so alone."

DR SID SCHWAB, *general surgeon*

If you have a headache, do what it says on the aspirin bottle: Take two aspirin and



—ROSEANNE BARR

FROM OUR SIDE OF THE STETHOSCOPE

I was coming to just as my doctor was finishing my colonoscopy. Feeling some pressure “back there,” I reached down and patted the doctor on the head.

“It’s OK, Yehudi,” I said. “Just go back to sleep.”

Yehudi is the name of my dog.

SHERRY MOORE, *patient, Wisconsin*

MEDICAL TRANSCRIPTION ERRORS

To paraphrase Markus Herz: be careful of medical transcripts; you may die of a misprint.

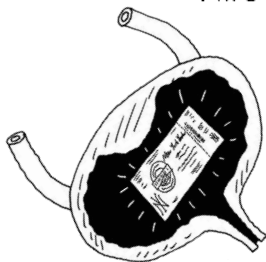
- Social history reveals this one-year-old patient does not smoke or drink and is presently unemployed.
- On the second day, the knee was better, and on the third day, it disappeared.
- Discharge status: alive but without permission.
- Exam of genitalia reveals that he is circus sized.
- Occasional, constant infrequent headaches.
- Bleeding started in the rectal area and continued all the way to Los Angeles.
- She is numb from her toes down.

Sources: gmrttranscription.com; nursebuff.com



When doctors find something in your bladder, it's never anything good, like tickets to a Yankees game.

—MIKE BIRBIGLIA



When I went to the ER to have a painful ingrown toenail removed, I was sobbing, gagging, petrified ... the works. But my doctor knew how to calm me down.

“Don’t worry about a thing,” he assured me. “I just looked up how to perform this operation on YouTube.”

CHELSEA BENDER,
patient, Pennsylvania

The day after I had surgery on my leg, a nurse came into my hospital room with a box in her hand. “Are you ready for this?”

“What is it?” I asked.

“Fleet enema. Didn’t your doctor tell you about it?”

“No.”

She rechecked the orders. “Whoa! It said feet elevated!”

JULIA FUSSELL,
patient, North Carolina

Patient: I'm worried about this birthmark.

Doctor: Birthmark, you say? How long have you had it?

Source: [overheardintheoffice.com](#)

My husband's new "unbreakable" titanium eyeglasses broke. When he brought the many pieces back to the optometrist to have the glasses replaced, the assistant asked what had happened.

"They fell under the lawn mower," he explained.

"Oh," she said, nodding. "Were you wearing them at the time?"

SUSAN STRONG,

South Glastonbury, Connecticut



Lawyer: Do you recall the time that you examined the body?

Doctor: The autopsy started around 8.30pm.

Lawyer: And Mr. Eddington was dead at the time?

Lawyer: "How did you happen to go to Dr Cherney?"

Witness: "Well, a gal down the road had had several of her children by Dr Cherney and said he was really good."

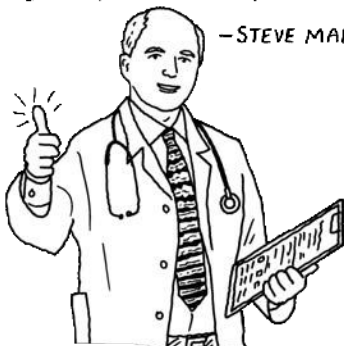
Lawyer: Doctor, did you say he was shot in the woods?

Doctor: No, I said he was shot in the lumbar region.

Source: [rinkworks.com](#)

First, the doctor told me the good news. He said that I was going to have a disease named after me.

—STEVE MARTIN



OVERHEARD AT THE NURSES' STATION

A gentleman calls our office with questions about an upcoming test he is scheduled for, and we talk at length about the procedure.

Patient: I'm sorry to have so many questions.

Me: Oh, that's no problem. You can always call and ask for clarification when you need it.

Patient: Thank you very much, Clara Fication! You've been very helpful.

Source: [notalwaysright.com](#)

After discussing a patient with my medical colleague, he ended his conversation by telling me, "I love you." Following an awkward pause, he said, "I'm sorry, you were telling me what to do, so it made me think I was speaking with my wife."

Source: [Scrubs magazine](#)



4 MEDICAL EXCUSES FOR MISSING WORK (PEOPLE ACTUALLY THOUGHT MIGHT FLY)

- "My child stuck a mint up my nose, and I had to go to the emergency room to have it removed."
- "I got sick from reading too much."
- "Employee got stuck in the blood pressure machine at the grocery store and couldn't get out."
- "My dog wasn't feeling well, so I tasted his food, and then I got sick."

Sources: careerbuilder.com;
blog.oregonlive.com

I was working in a long-term-care facility, and there was a celebration for one of the residents. It was her 100th birthday. She was quite somnolent as the party began, so I asked her, "Do you know how old you are today?"

"No, how old am I?"

"You're 100 years old."

"Well, no wonder I'm so tired."

Source: healthdegrees.com

Scene: I answer a patient's phone call ...

Me: Dermatology, how may I help you?

Patient: Hi, I just had an autopsy. I'd like to know my results.

Source: notalwaysright.com

Call it ... carma! A car belonging to a pregnant patient was broken into. The only thing that was stolen was a wine bottle in a brown paper bag. It turns out, that's where she was keeping her urine sample, which she'd brought in to be tested.

JANET GROW, *Kansas*

I asked a young mother in our neonatal unit why she thought we had so many expectant mothers from her small town. She said, "Well, we don't have cable."

Source: *Scrubs* magazine

The doctor explained to his patient that she suffered from inflammation of the cervix. Concerned, she demanded that he test her husband for it too.

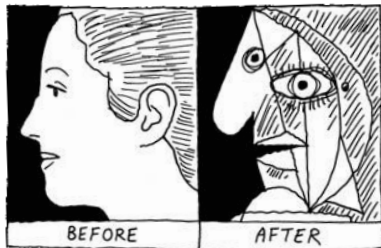
The doctor assured her, "I'm positive your husband does not have cervicitis."

She shot back, "How do you know? You haven't examined him yet."

ROIANNE LOPE, *New Jersey*

I was going to have plastic surgery until I noticed that the doctor's office was full of portraits by Picasso.

—RITA RUDNER



TAKE TWO JOKES AND CALL ME IN THE MORNING!

A doctor tells his wife, "You're a terrible cook, you spend too much money, and you're a lousy lover!"

Two weeks later, he comes home to find her making out with his partner.

"What's going on here?!" he demands.

"Just getting a second opinion," she replies.

Submitted by **DR DEBORAH AXELROD,**
New York University
Perlmutter Cancer Center

"Did you hear what happened to Mel?" one friend said to another. "He

MEDICINE IN THE NEWS

Actual stories ripped from the headlines:

- "Utah Poison Control Center reminds everyone not to take poison"
Source: kizaz.com

- "Elderly woman breaks hip at Niagara hospital, told by staff to call ambulance"
Source: the Toronto Star

- "Breathing oxygen linked to staying alive"
Source: Mason County News (Texas)

- "Troopers: Trucker pulling his own tooth caused accident that congested I-20/59"
Source: al.com



My male roommate and I mixed up our nicotine and testosterone patches. He got cranky and hungry. I got a raise and a corner office.

— KAREN RIPLEY



was seeing his doctor for six months because of chest pains and shortness of breath. Last week, he dropped dead from cancer."

"That's terrible," says the other friend. "Well, I told him a hundred times to go see my doctor."

"Is he any good?"


"Good? He's the best! If he treats you for heart problems ... you'll die of heart problems."

Submitted by **DR STEVEN LAMM,**
internal medicine specialist

Mr Harper sued a hospital, saying that after his wife had surgery there, she lost all interest in sex.

A hospital spokesperson replied, "Mrs Harper was admitted for cataract surgery. All we did was correct her eyesight."

Submitted by **DR AMAR SAFDAR,**
infectious disease specialist

A man with short brown hair, smiling and looking upwards, is sitting on a white stool. He is wearing blue medical scrubs and a stethoscope around his neck. He is in the process of tying a red and yellow high-top shoe on his right foot. The background is a solid light blue. There are four comic-style speech bubbles around him. One at the top right says "CHUCKLE". One on the left says "A frantic man calls his doctor: 'My wife is pregnant, and her contractions are only two minutes apart!'" One below that says "Is this her first child?" the doctor asks. One at the bottom right says "No!" the man shouts. "This is her husband!!"

CHUCKLE

A frantic man calls his doctor:
"My wife is pregnant, and her
contractions are only two minutes
apart!"

"Is this her first child?"
the doctor asks.

"No!" the man shouts.
"This is her husband!!"





FANTASY ISLAND

BY LAUREN McKEON

Northern Ireland has become a mecca for *Game of Thrones* fans – which doesn't mean there aren't plenty of earthly delights for those who can't tell a Dothraki from a dragon



The hills of Ireland are alive with the sound of Game of Thrones fans touring sites traversed by the show's stars, such as Sophie Turner and Aidan Gillen, who play Sansa Stark and Petyr Baelish, respectively, in the series

LAST YEAR, WHEN I broke my leg and was stuck in bed for three months, the one thing that got me through was watching HBO's *Game of Thrones* (*GoT*). The show's legions of fans knew something my doctors didn't: an epic fantasy world of warring noble houses has surprising healing powers. When I was finally vertical again – and in anticipation of the Season 5 premiere – my newly perambulating feet headed to Northern Ireland. My quest: to explore the real world of my favourite make-believe show and a coastline that would inspire any traveller to fight dragons.

THE MUCH SOUGHT-AFTER Iron Throne – the seat of *GoT* power and the subject of the battle on which the show centres – is right in the heart of Belfast. The sprawling Titanic Studios is home to most of the series' in-house filming,

but unfortunately, you basically have to be royalty to get in. Although it's not generally open to visitors, Queen Elizabeth II was granted a rare tour a few weeks before I visited, meeting Maisie Williams, who plays Arya Stark. When asked what the visit was like, Williams responded that it was "awfully strange" to have a real-life monarch on set.

Across the street from the studios, access to the newly built £97 million Titanic Belfast is (thankfully) less exclusive. The museum is a step back in time, taking visitors deep inside the industrial culture of the city, where the *Titanic* was built, through the ship's journey and inquisition into the sinking, and right up to today's deep-sea diving excursions to its

wreckage site. In addition to artefacts, such as an on-board menu saved in a survivor's purse (lunch on April 14, 1912, featured corned ox tongue), the museum features recreations of the cabins, complete with holographic passengers, and a theme-park-style ride through a massive and magical reimagining of the *Titanic's* construction site – cacophony of metal clanking on metal included.

THE 200-KILOMETRE causeway coastal drive, north of Belfast, is hours of green, rollicking hills and boat-studded turquoise water. Roughly an hour's drive from the city is the Giant's Causeway, a UNESCO World Heritage Site that interrupts the coastal landscape with hectares of otherworldly basalt columns. Nearby, the 30-metre-high Carrick-a-Rede rope bridge, first erected by salmon fishermen to cross from the mainland to the island for which it's named, is now used by thousands of thrill-seeking tourists looking to scare the bejesus out of themselves (I barely suppressed a scream as it swayed). For *GoT* fans like me, there are several set locations dotted along the drive, including Cairncastle, which has been used to film most of the exterior Winterfell scenes (the home base of the Starks) and where the series opens.

NOT COUNTING INCOME FROM tourism, *Game of Thrones* has injected £82 million into Northern Ireland's economy over four seasons of filming,

TRAVEL ESSENTIALS

Titanic Belfast, 1 Olympic Way, Queens Rd, Titanic Quarter, Belfast, +44 28 9076 6386, titanicbelfast.com

Giant's Causeway, 44 Causeway Rd, Bushmills, County Antrim, +44 28 2073 1855, causewaycoastandglens.com

Carrick-a-Rede Rope Bridge, 119a Whitepark Rd, Ballintoy, County Antrim, +44 28 2076 9839, causewaycoastandglens.com

Steensons, Bedford House, 16-22 Bedford St, Belfast, +44 28 9024 8269, thesteensons.com



*(Above) Carrick-a-Rede rope bridge.
(Below) The dramatic interlocking
basalt columns of Giant's Causeway*

creating roughly 900 full-time and 5700 part-time jobs, of which Dan Spencer and his wife, Brona (née Steenson), have the best. Owners of Steensons, a jewellery shop in Belfast, the couple have created many of the show's signature accessories (such as King Joffrey's crowns).

The store's aesthetic is more modern than medieval but, prompted by the daily throng of tourists, Steensons has launched a *GoT*-inspired line of brooches, with pendants and rings being added this spring. When asked if he's a fan, Spencer's mouth slides into a grin: "I suppose we are now." He admits he started watching only to see the shop's trinkets but – like me and millions of others – soon got sucked in. "It's really quite good." **R**



Why We Bend The Rules

Even the most honest among us lie, cheat,
or push boundaries now and then ...

BY JENA PINCOTT
FROM *PSYCHOLOGY TODAY*

PHOTOGRAPHS BY YASU+JUNKO

IN MY EARLY 30s, I USED AN EXPIRED uni-student ID to buy discounted movie tickets. (I'd peeled off the date sticker.) I'd tell myself, I'm buying a ticket I wouldn't have otherwise bought. One must be resourceful in an overpriced city, right?

If you also break rules sometimes, you understand this paradox. We think of ourselves as honest citizens despite daily acts (one to two on average) of cheating, lying, or otherwise innocuous rule breaking. We stand in the express line with too many groceries, play hooky from work, board planes before our seat is called, or lie to give our kids an advantage.

Researchers who study everyday transgressions believe that character isn't the real driver; situational forces are. We might break the rules under some conditions and in some mind-sets, but not in others.

The Creativity Defence

Years ago, Francesca Gino, a professor at Harvard, and Dan Ariely, a behavioural economist at Duke, wondered if people with higher IQs were more likely to cheat. The duo found that cleverness didn't correlate with dishonesty, but *creativity* did. When Gino and Ariely posed ethical dilemmas to employees in an advertising firm, the copywriters and designers were more likely to break the rules than the accountants. The more creative you are, the easier it is to retell the story of what happened when you behaved dishonestly.

Test yourself. Why did you pilfer office supplies? You might say that you worked through lunch or that businesses get the stuff cheaply. This is how creative types "reframe" an event. And a creative mind-set, Gino found, is easy to induce in almost anyone – just by using subtle cues. When players in a gambling game were primed to think more flexibly (by

being exposed to words like *original*, *novel*, and *imaginative* in a text they read), they cheated more often than those not given the prompts did.

"Working for an organisation that stresses being innovative and original can increase our tendency to cheat," Gino says.

"Should we encourage less creativity in banking?" Ariely wonders.

The Status Defence

Picture two accountants alerted to suspicious entries in the books. The first takes the violation seriously. The second pooh-poohs it. Who has more clout? When Dutch psychologist Gerben van Kleef asked study participants that question, most chose the second accountant. Powerful people break the rules – ergo, breaking rules makes one seem more powerful.

"In its modest form, rule breaking is actually healthy," says Zhen Zhang of Arizona State University. He found that relatively minor Ferris Bueller-style

violations during adolescence – damaging property, playing hooky – predicted an esteemed occupation: entrepreneur.

When young men, in particular, take risks that pan out, testosterone levels surge. The hormone may underlie the “winner effect,” say researchers John Coates and Joe Herbert of the University of Cambridge, who tracked the hormonal activity of stock option traders (again, all male) over their good and bad days in the market. The more wins, the higher the hormones, the greater the confidence boost, the bigger the risks, and so on.

But at a certain point, risk taking can become irrational, reckless, or ruthless. This can cause “ethical numbing.” Consider Steve Jobs: As Apple grew, so did lawsuits against it, such as those over patents.

Being wealthy takes a moral toll on both genders. Studies have found that the \$150,000-plus-per-annum set was four times as likely to cheat as those making less than \$15,000 a year when playing a game to win \$50. The rich didn’t stop for pedestrians at a crosswalk nearly as often as less-wealthy drivers. This held true even when people were role-playing – that is, they weren’t rich in real life.

That’s because environment – not any intrinsic personality trait – abets rule breaking, argues Andy Yap, a behavioural scientist. Yap and his colleagues asked volunteers to sit in an SUV-sized driver’s seat versus a

cramped one or an executive-size office space versus a cubicle and then tested their responses to various moral scenarios. In roomier settings, people reported feeling more powerful and were more likely to steal money, cheat on a test, and commit traffic violations in a driving simulation.

The Bonding Defence

We aren’t born with an enlightened, universal sense of fairness for all, Harvard University psychologist Joshua Greene argues in his book *Moral Tribes*. We evolved as tribal animals who followed the rules within small groups (us) but not with the rest of the world (them).

We may be born with a crude sense of right and wrong, but our culture refines it. If your tribe downloads pirated music, sells dubious stocks, or accepts bribes, you’re likely to go with the flow or cover up for peers.

The Level-Playing-Field Defence

Let’s say you witnessed someone tear through a red light. Or a colleague received a promotion after boozing with the boss, while you toiled and got nothing. Chances are, you’ll experience a knee-jerk reaction: to get even or at least to level the field.

To test the fairness instinct, Harvard researcher Leslie John, along with two colleagues, told volunteers that others in the room were making more money than they were for getting questions



right on a trivia test.

Guess what happened? That group, which perceived itself as disadvantaged, cheated more than those who believed that everyone received an equal payment.

The Solution: Self Awareness

The real threat is the slippery slope – minor transgressions can snowball. Imagine Bernie Madoff or Lance Armstrong thinking, *Just this once. OK, once more.* And eventually, they just don't think about it. Rule breaking worsens over time. Kids who cheat on high school exams are three times more likely in adulthood to lie to a customer or inflate an insurance claim compared with non-cheaters, according to the Josephson Institute.

Behavioural psychology offers a few antidotes. Keep yourself fed and well-rested – we're likelier to lapse when hungry or tired. Reflect on how your actions look through others' eyes. In a classic British experiment, a drawing of eyes mounted over a collection box at a corporate coffee bar helped enforce

the honour system.

When people sign an ethics pledge at the beginning rather than the end of tax forms or job applications – before there's an opportunity to cheat – they are significantly less likely to be dishonest. The same goes when asked to recall the Ten Commandments before a test, which Ariely found works even among the non-religious.

We like to see ourselves in a positive light. In a Stanford study, when researchers used the verb *cheat* – please don't cheat – participants still cheated freely because they felt distanced from the act. When the noun *cheater* was used – don't be a cheater – hardly anyone did.

The novelist Wallace Stegner summed it up in his novel *All the Little Live Things*: "It is the beginning of wisdom when you recognise that the best you can do is choose which rules you want to live by." To which he added: "It's persistent and aggravated imbecility to pretend you can live without any." **R**



Points to Ponder

NO-ONE CAN give money to everyone who asks. But when you come upon one of your species who is struggling, you need to let him know that you see him. Look into his eyes, and let him look into yours.

ELIZABETH BERG,
author, in Real Simple

THERE IS A DIMENSION to life that is not fully knowable simply by our rational capacities. I love reason, I love science, but reason doesn't explain to me what it feels like to kiss my wife.

THOMAS TROEGER,
theologian, on wonderingound.com

[THE 21ST CENTURY IS] just not what it was cracked up to be. I would have liked to see us control the weather as opposed to being able to make a phone call without having a cord.

LEWIS BLACK,
comedian, in the Eugene Weekly

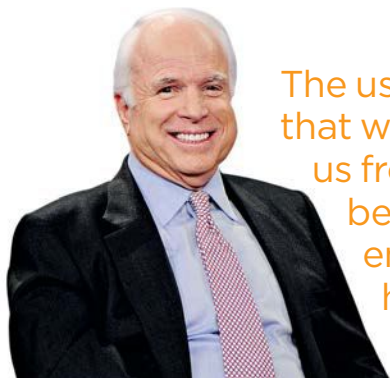
GIVING YOUR BABY a name, it turns out, also includes anticipating how other children will cruelly twist it to hurt them. After a few rounds of brainstorming possible mean things, you begin to think you may have missed your calling.

MEAGHAN O'CONNELL,
writer, on nymag.com



They say you really appreciate a garden only once you reach a certain age ... There seems to be something miraculous about seeing the relentless optimism of new growth after the bleakness of winter, a kind of joy in the difference every year.

JOJO MOYES, *author, in her novel Me Before You*



The use of torture compromises that which most distinguishes us from our enemies: our belief that all people, even ... enemies, possess basic human rights.

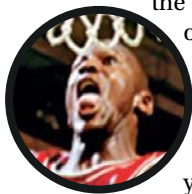
JOHN MCCAIN, *US senator*, in a statement to the Senate

PERHAPS EVEN MORE often than exchanging pleasantries, we also exchange dissatisfactions ... Two strangers complaining on a subway platform can end up cracking a smile or laughing, and though it would hardly be considered the beginning of a lifelong friendship, it is still neighbourly.

MARIANA ALESSANDRI, PhD,

professor of philosophy, in the *New York Times*

THE PRICE OF GREATNESS is more than you want to pay. The world's most legendary athletes are usually



the ones most wildly out of balance. Michael Jordan had to crush you, whether you were an opponent or a teammate ... Enjoy your heroes, but don't envy them.

RICK REILLY,

sportswriter, on *espn.com*

THE THINGS WE DO ... are like the pyramids that the Egyptians built to honour the pharaohs. Only instead of being made of stone, they're made out of the memories people have of you.

R.J. PALACIO,

author, in her young-adult novel *Wonder*

WE ALWAYS LOOK at our children's futures with equal parts unjustified hope and unjustified alarm – both utopia and dystopia. We look at our own past with wistful nostalgia.

ALISON GOPNIK, PhD,

professor of psychology, in the *Wall Street Journal*

THERE HAS ALWAYS BEEN job destruction because of automation and technological progress. The important thing to keep in mind is that there has also always been job creation because of the same forces.

ANDREW McAFEE, PhD,

research scientist, in *New Scientist*


“GET ME OUT OF HERE!”

BY KENNETH MILLER

Trapped on the Bottom of the Ocean

AT 4.30 ON A SUNDAY MORNING, two hours before dawn, the tugboat *Jascon 4* was towing a tanker towards an oil platform 32km off the coast of Nigeria. The wind was stiff and the sea choppy, but conditions weren't rough enough to alarm the tugboat's Ukrainian captain or his crew of 11 Nigerians. Most of them were in bed.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY YASU+JUNKO





*Harrison Okene was
the only survivor
after his boat sank
to the ocean floor*

Their doors were bolted against pirates – a constant menace in this corner of the South Atlantic. The tug's cook, Harrison Okene, was below deck, preparing to start his shift.

Suddenly, a rogue wave struck the vessel broadside. The towrope snapped, throwing the boat off-balance. Harrison, 29, was tossed

room to pitch-dark room, groping for anything that might help him survive.

In one cabin, he found a life vest fitted with two emergency beacons. In the engineers' office, there were tools; he used a screwdriver to remove the beacons, which he stuffed into his boxer shorts (the only clothing he was wearing) to keep his hands free.

“HARRISON HAD NO IDEA HOW LONG THE AIR POCKET WOULD LAST OR IF ANYONE WOULD FIND HIM BEFORE IT DISAPPEARED

around. He saw three men washed away as they ran towards an exit hatch. The rush of water swept Harrison into the officers' bathroom, where he held on to the sink to keep his head from going under.

“Everywhere was dark as I was thrown from one end of the [boat] to the other,” Harrison told a reporter for Nigeria's *Nation* newspaper. In moments, the craft had turned upside down and begun sinking toward the ocean floor, 30 metres below.

An overturned boat doesn't always fill with water immediately; like an inverted cup plunged underwater, it can hold pockets of air that persist for some time. That was the case with the *Jascon 4*. Once the boat settled on the bottom, Harrison swam or waded from

Aided by the lights, Harrison discovered a cabin that had been kept mostly dry by an air pocket. As the water crept higher, he used a hammer to pry panelling off the wall. He laid the planks atop a stack of mattresses. Then he stood on the platform – clutching a bottle of Coke that he'd come across in his rummaging – and prayed that the water would stop rising. After reaching his chest, it did.

Harrison had no idea how long the air pocket would last or if anyone would find him before it disappeared. All he could do was wait and hope. To pass time, he replayed his life, beginning with his earliest memories. He thought about his wife of five years, Akpos, and wondered if he would live to become a father. He was distracted

by thrashing sounds outside the cabin and guessed that sharks or barracudas were eating the bodies of friends he'd been laughing with the night before. Terrified, he grabbed a plank of paneling to fend off predators.

Harrison made the soda last as long as possible, but when it ran out, hunger and thirst set in. His skin began to peel from soaking in salt water; his tongue grew sore and swollen, and his body temperature dropped lower and lower. The emergency beacons fizzled out, leaving him in darkness again. He was unbearably tired, but he recited Bible verses to keep himself awake. If he slept, he knew he might drown or be devoured. Or he might miss his rescuers, should they ever appear.

And then he heard something banging on the hull of the boat. Harrison grabbed a hammer and banged back. A few minutes later, a light appeared in the water beneath him – a diver's headlamp. The man touched Harrison's fingers, thinking he'd found a corpse. Harrison squeezed the man's hand. "He's alive! He's alive!" the diver shouted into his radio headset.

As Harrison later learned, the company that owned the tugboat had hired a South African scuba team, DCN Diving, to recover bodies from the vessel; they'd found four corpses and were astounded to discover that Harrison was not the fifth.

The search team fitted Harrison with an oxygen mask, then hustled him into a diving bell, which took him

to the surface. When he saw the starry sky, he assumed he'd spent a day underwater. In fact, the men told him, it was Tuesday evening. He'd been trapped underwater for 62 hours – nearly three full days.

Harrison spent another 60 hours in a decompression chamber. At last, he returned home to the city of Warri, on the Niger Delta, where he reunited with his loved ones and tried to put the nightmare behind him.

HARRISON'S STORY has intrigued scientists all over the world. How could a man survive in an air pocket just one metre high, underwater for three days without running out of oxygen, being poisoned by the carbon dioxide he exhaled, or succumbing to hypothermia?

Maxim Umansky, a physicist at the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in California, speculates that another air pocket under the hull of the boat must have been feeding additional oxygen into Harrison's area. Anna V., a commenter on the Stack Exchange Physics blog, got more philosophical: "He was just lucky that the air siphoned where he was trapped."

The *Jascon 4*'s sole survivor, is grateful for his deliverance, but he isn't sure he'll ever go back to sea. "Sometimes it feels like the bed I'm sleeping in is sinking," he told a Reuters reporter. "I jump up screaming."



*College friends Smith,
Jones and Troxel
endured frigid
temperatures*

Stuck in an Ice Cave

DRAWN BY the promise of the area's spectacular underground scenery, Nate Smith, Simon Jones and Jarin Troxel set out to explore Wyoming's Darby Canyon Wind and Ice Caves from nearby Rexburg, Idaho, one Saturday in May 2013.

Nate and Simon were friends at Brigham Young University's Rexburg campus; their buddy Jarin was on leave from the college. Nate and Jarin had navigated the cave system the previous autumn, but neither had done any other technically demanding routes like this one that would require climbing and rappelling, and Simon was a complete novice. But the young men were fit and equipped with climbing ropes, head torches, and snacks.

The trio left their car at the Darby Canyon trailhead at about noon, hiked up the snowy mountain-side, and reached the mouth of the ice cave at 3pm. Judging by Nate and Jarin's earlier expedition, they expected to reach the end of the Wind Cave to exit about ten hours later. The descent began with an exhilarating slide down an icy slope, then a 23m rappel down a frozen waterfall. They moved through a chamber of stalactites and another carpeted with transparent globes the size of dinosaur eggs.

Soon afterward, the men came to passages so low that they were forced to belly crawl. Jarin had brought directions he'd found online, but they were hazy; several times, the group hit what seemed like dead ends and were forced to reverse course. At 3am, they came to a rushing river where there should have been a narrow creek. Nate and Simon went off to investigate, while an exhausted Jarin lay down on the rocks and took a nap.

When the scouts returned, they reported that the river would indeed lead them out of the cave system. Afraid that the fast-moving water might sweep him downriver, Jarin fastened a rope to a small stone arch to stabilise himself. But as he set foot into the water, the arch gave way, and he tumbled into the frigid river. "I'm OK, guys," Jarin said, getting to his feet. But his clothes were soaked, and as he refastened the rope to a more secure pillar, he was shaking with cold. After fording the river and a hip-deep pool, Nate and Simon were shivering too. The trio managed to rappel down a 6m-deep pit without incident, but as Jarin clambered down the other side, he fell again. Once more he insisted he was fine.

A while later, the men reached a cave about 3m in diameter; the floor was covered with ice that rose

into a small mound at the far edge of the chamber. This mound, Jarin said, was the ice plug that blocked the exit throughout winter and into spring. There had been no plug during his earlier visit to the cave with Nate. Still, he thought it could be cut through easily with his ice axe.

Jarin took turns with the others

men began shouting for help. Someone yelled back, "We're coming!"

It took another 45 minutes for members of the Teton County Search and Rescue team to clear away the 1.2m-thick plug. Finally, a man in a hard hat climbed through the narrow opening. The search had begun that morning, the rescuers explained, when Nate

“NONE OF THEM SAID WHAT THEY WERE ALL THINKING: AT THIS RATE, WE’LL NEVER BREAK THROUGH

whacking at the mound. But the slope of the roof made it impossible to get a good swing. For hours, the men rotated between chopping, resting under a space blanket, and pacing to keep off the chill. Sleep was out of the question – after dozing for a few minutes, they would jolt awake with chattering teeth.

To keep up their spirits, the men prayed and told jokes. By mid-morning, however, they had a new reason for worry: as the hole in the ice plug slowly deepened, it filled with slushy meltwater, which splashed them with each axe blow and further reduced the blade's impact. None of them said what they were all thinking: *At this rate, we'll never break through.*

Around 4.30pm, Nate saw light penetrating the ice from the other side of the plug. Hearing faint voices, the

and Simon's roommate, Denis Tang, called to report them missing. Two dozen volunteers had combed Darby Canyon on snowshoes and in snowmobiles and off-road vehicles.

Team members guided Jarin, Nate and Simon through the last stretch of the Wind Cave, and the trio stepped into daylight for the first time in 27 hours. When the young men reached the trailhead, at 7.30, friends and family members rushed to embrace them. "Seeing how many people loved us was overwhelming," Simon said. "We've come to recognise the value of preparedness."

All told, the guys weren't seriously injured, and the incident hasn't diminished their love of spelunking. They even plan to return to the caves this summer. **R**

That's Outrageous!

IT'S ALL IN THE NUMBERS

\$37.50 The price a New Jersey restaurant-goer thought he was paying for a bottle of wine. The waitress said it cost "thirty-seven fifty," but she had a different thirty-seven fifty in mind, as in the real price – \$3750. In the end, the restaurant lowered the bill to \$2200.

Source: nj.com



Institution were seeking from Anheuser-Busch and other alcohol companies. Their complaint: the businesses should have warned them that booze was addictive and that it could lead to a life of crime. The complaint was dismissed.

Source: blog.oregonlive.com

\$500 The starting bid for a pile of bird poop on eBay. A man found droppings on his car's windshield that bore a resemblance to the late Michael Jackson. So he auctioned them off. "One of two things will happen," he told reporters. "It will go for an astronomical amount, or I'll get nothing." He got nothing.

Source: upi.com

\$1,900,000 The price that a portrait sold for at a New York City auction house. The portrait was of the late actress Bea Arthur ... topless.

Source: nypost.com

\$1,000,000,000 The sum five inmates at the Idaho State Correctional

\$680,000 The value of a three-storey home overlooking the Atlantic Ocean that a Missouri couple had built in Florida. The five-bedroom dream house includes 5.5 bathrooms, a home theatre, a games room, and a screened-in pool. It was also accidentally built on a vacant lot owned by someone else.

Source: news-journalonline.com

\$160,000 The worth of the diamond that a UPS worker allegedly stole while unloading an aeroplane.

\$20 The price of the marijuana that the above worker traded the \$160,000 diamond for.

Source: abc15.com

START AT THE BEGINNING:

Metadata has been part of your entire life no matter when you were born. But in the digital age it has become a polarising buzzword.



Metadata

BY HAZEL FLYNN



TELL ME MORE: Metadata is simply information about information. Old-fashioned library card catalogues are metadata: they don't include the contents of each book, but do list each book's title, author, publisher, year of publication and subject area (fiction, history, art, etc). With enough time and patience you could use this metadata to identify every book the library had on a particular subject, by a particular author or from a particular year.

AND IN THE DIGITAL AGE? Unlike those old hand-compiled catalogues, digital files automatically amass metadata. Even simple word-processing files can store information on who created the file and when, who edited it and for how long, the file size and more. Digital cameras can show when and where a photo was taken. When you make a phone call, your telecommunications provider gathers data on what number you called, how long you spoke for and where both parties were during the call. Web browsing leaves tracks. Most of us generate massive amounts of metadata each day.

“We kill people based on metadata.”

GENERAL MICHAEL HAYDEN, former director of the US National Security Agency and CIA.



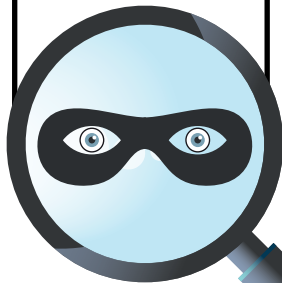
WHAT USE IS IT?

Governments around the world are increasingly keen to access and analyse metadata generated by their own citizens and others.

Proponents say they are only looking for suspicious patterns, not examining content, and it is an essential tool for national security. In March this year, Australia's attorney-general, George Brandis, introduced laws requiring phone and internet providers to keep customers' metadata for two years, saying, "Metadata is the basic building block in nearly every counter-terrorism, counter-espionage and organised crime investigation." Others have serious concerns.

"Smart criminals will devise ways to get around the law."

GEORGE BRANDIS,
*Australian attorney-general,
on the introduction of
data-retention laws.*



5 BILLION:

the number of mobile phone locations being tracked worldwide by the US National Security Agency each day in 2013, as revealed by controversial whistleblower Edward Snowden (left).

THE ARGUMENTS AGAINST: Opponents say metadata retention will deter informed confidential sources from revealing information the public needs to know, because their identity cannot be protected. They also say ordinary citizens are at risk of being falsely suspected. US Law and Public Policy Professor David Cole gives the example of a person calling their aunt, who had called a pizza delivery driver who had once been phoned by someone with suspected terrorist links. Tenuous as this chain is, it's enough, says Cole, to put the original caller on security agencies' suspicion lists.





The friendly comma lays traps of ambiguity and hilarious confusion for the unwary, explains RD copy editor **Donyale Harrison**

Comma Sense

ANN PATCHETT is a very good writer, as evidenced by her note to the *New York Times* last October:

"To the Editor:

I was grateful to see my book This Is the Story of a Happy Marriage mentioned... When highlighting a few of the essays in the collection, the review mentions topics ranging from "her stabilising second marriage to her beloved dog" without benefit of comma, thus giving the impression that Sparky and I are hitched. While my love for my dog is deep, he married a dog named Maggie at Parnassus Books last summer as part of a successful fund-raiser for the Nashville Humane Association. I am married to Karl VanDevender. We are all very happy in our respective unions."

The presence, or absence, of a comma can make or break a sentence. Here, the *NYT* reviewer forgot he was making a list. If it had been “from her stabilising second marriage, to her beloved dog, to her passion for books” then the commas would in all likelihood have made the newspaper. But because there are only two items, it all went hilariously wrong.

This is just one area in which commas can lead us astray. Let’s take a quick look at the type called the serial comma (also known as the Oxford or Harvard comma). It’s the comma that is often put before the word “and” in a list, and it has its lovers and its haters. There are people whose passion for the serial comma rivals that of Romeo for Juliet, and there are others who feel that writing “She was shopping for onions, bread, spinach, and juice” is the sure sign of a deranged mind.

The truth is somewhere in between. Most of the time there’s no real need for a serial comma, but it does have its moments. Grammarly, a website dedicated to all things language, gives a brilliant example of a sentence from Sky News – “Top stories: World leaders at Mandela tribute, Obama-Castro handshake and same-sex marriage date set...” One little comma would have kept both presidents from alleged bigamy.

The problem is that we’re all so familiar with the comma that it becomes a handy grammatical fallback. It has one of the longest histories

in punctuation, starting life looking like a / and called a “virgule”. It was inserted by medieval monks whenever they felt a speaker should pause in reading from a manuscript. In the late 1400s, an Italian printer named Aldus Manutius lowered the line in relation to the words around it and curved it, creating the comma as we know it (he also invented the semicolon, italic type and a font called Bembo, which is still used today. Serious over-achiever.)

Its role as a mark to show readers where to draw breath survives in our habit of using a comma wherever we want a pause. But this can cause problems. Often we accidentally chop necessary bits off from the main body of sentences: “The dog we found, is the one my friend lost.” Each part of this sentence needs the other – the parts don’t make sense on their own – so there should be no comma in between.

The reason some people would put that comma in is that it sounds as though the first part of the sentence is introductory, and it’s right to have a comma after an introductory clause: “A renowned cardsharp, Ian was not to be trusted when it came to friendly poker games.” But this is only OK if the words or words aren’t vital to the rest of the sentence. “So, I think I like the blue best” needs a comma, because “so” is being used as a filler word and could be dropped. But “The bats had moved away months earlier. So the birds were to blame after all” is different. “So” here means “as you can see

from the argument I've just presented" and is necessary.

A good rule is to read the sentence without the words separated out by a comma. Does it still make sense and have the same basic meaning? Excellent! Comma stays! No? Remove it. Be fierce in checking that the meaning remains the same: "I went shopping with my friend, Claire" means that I only have one friend, and her name is Claire. Take out the comma and I have several, including Claire.

Two small pitfalls remain. The first is that if you use one comma to mark off an extra bit in the middle of a sentence, you need to use another to mark the end of the extra bit. "The keyboard, which was only a year old, bore the stains of many a desk lunch."

The second is that it usually doesn't work well when commas are used to link complete sentences. Called a

"comma splice," it creates sentences like: "The Middle Ages were frequently violent, life expectancies were lower than today." Read it out loud and you'll hear that you naturally stop at the end of the first section and

pause – start a new sentence – before the second. For writers who don't like the choppy sound of two short related sentences, add a linking word like "and" or "but" after the comma, or use a semicolon or dash instead of a comma.

As long as your sentences still make sense and mean what you mean them to, you're probably doing well in the comma depart-

ment. Try not to get too caught up. E.B. White, famous writer and style guru, once wrote that "Commas in *The New Yorker* fall with the precision of knives in a circus act, outlining the victim." In an ideal world, I'd suggest clinical punctuation, not forensic. **R**

COMMA GET IT


You need commas to:

- Separate the items in a list. Usually you don't require one before the "and".
- Separate an introductory or afterthought clause: "And so they lived happily ever after, if we ignore the arguments over housework."
- Separate non-essential parts of a sentence: "A local resident, Lee Chang, said that the river often flooded."
- Link short related sentences with an "and" or "but": "Life was brutal there, but it was better than the alternative."



POP SONGS FOR PHILOSOPHY BUFFS

Total Eclipse of Descartes JARRY LEE FROM MCSWEENEYS.NET




ANIMAL INSTINCT

*PATIENT: Action,
harbour seal.
AFFLICTION: Unease
over medical exams
and treatments*

Hey Doc, Can You Hear Us?

BY ALEX HALBERSTADT FROM NEW YORK TIMES MAGAZINE
PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROBIN SCHWARTZ



***PATIENT:** Sukari,
Masai giraffe.
AFFLICTION: Anxiety
around people with
large cameras*

Dr Vint Virga
has long believed
that animals
have thoughts and
rich emotional lives.
Science is finally
catching up with him

DR VINT VIRGA LIKES TO ARRIVE at a zoo several hours before it opens and watch the animals, sometimes for hours. That's because what to an average zoo visitor looks like frolicking or restlessness or even boredom looks to Virga like a veritable Russian novel of truculence, joy, sociability, horniness, ire, protectiveness, deference, melancholy and even humour.

The ability to interpret animal behaviour, Virga says, is not easy. Do you know what it means when an elephant lowers her head and folds her trunk underneath it? Or when a zebra softly blows air between her lips, or when a red fox screams, sounding disconcertingly like an infant?

Virga knows. He is a behaviourist whose full-time job is tending to the psychological welfare of animals in captivity. The profession is an odd one: declaring that you are an expert is sometimes enough to be taken for one.

Most behaviourists are former animal trainers; Virga happens to be a veterinarian. He works with zoos across Europe and the United States, where he is based, and like most mental-health professionals, he believes that his patients possess unique personalities and vibrant emotional lives.

The notion that animals think and feel makes all kinds of scientific types uncomfortable. "If you ask my colleagues whether animals have emotions and thoughts," says computational neuroscientist Philip Low, "many will drop their voices to a whisper or simply change the subject. They don't want to touch it."

That may be changing. A profusion of recent studies has shown animals to be far closer to us than we previously believed – it turns out that common shore crabs feel and remember pain, dolphins recognise themselves in mirrors, and dogs really do feel elation in their owners' presence.

Virga, 57, is not a researcher; his convictions about animal individuality predate the recent science. Zoos contact him when animals develop difficulties that vets and keepers cannot address. Often, the afflictions haven't been documented in the wild and appear uncomfortably close to our own. He has treated severely depressed snow leopards, brown bears with obsessive-compulsive disorder, and phobic zebras.

"Scientists often say that we don't know what animals feel because they can't speak to us and can't report their inner states," Virga told me. "But the thing is, they *are* reporting their inner states. We're just not listening."

THERE'S NO DENYING the public qualms about keeping animals captive. Much of the mistrust that clings to zoos and aquariums stems



PATIENT: *Sha-Lei, red panda.*
AFFLICTION: *Difficulty adjusting
to new habitat and companion*

from their less than picturesque past. “Zoos have changed incredibly in the last 30 years,” says Mark Reed, the executive director of the Sedgwick County Zoo in Wichita, Kansas. “These days, moats and glass have replaced cages; there are education departments and conservation initiatives.”

The care of animals’ psychic welfare was particularly dismal. “Zoos typically had an all-male, high-school-educated work force,” Reed recalls. “Administering a sedative meant using a dart gun; at the sight of it, the terrified animal would panic.”

Positive reinforcement – the use of clickers and treats to indicate and



PATIENT: *Willie, donkey.*
AFFLICTION: *Depression
over change in habitat*

reward desired behaviours – has replaced the angry gesture and the hose. The approach was pioneered by marine mammal trainers. “You can’t use the threat of punishment on a killer whale,” Virga explained, “because she simply will swim away from you.”

Zoo-exhibit designers now focus on replicating the animals’ natural habitats and, more and more, are guided by the ethos of enrichment, which Virga defines as “attempting to give the animal a stimulating environment, things to explore and an abundance of choices”.

But can improved conditions justify captivity? One case study turned out

to be his patient Molly, an aoudad, more commonly known as a Barbary sheep, at Roger Williams Park Zoo in Providence, Rhode Island. Virga lives nearby and has worked with the zoo for nine years. I visited the park as Virga was about to begin his rounds, and met Molly in the enclosed, hay-carpeted barn where she spends nights; she sniffed at me and then bleated an abrupt greeting, or maybe it was a warning. She had a tawny coat and horns roughly the size and shape of a large zucchini.

Molly had been a typical seven-year-old when she suddenly lost the use of her tail, which aoudads use to signal danger and brush away insects. The area under her immobile tail became vulnerable to infection, and the zoo staff made the decision to amputate.

Shortly after, Molly grew agitated and twitchy. She began to confine herself to three spots in the exhibit, and she stood scanning the air for insects, no longer interested in the other aoudads. According to her main keeper, Amanda Markley, “she wouldn’t even let her best friend Bonnie around her.”

The initial plan was to direct her attention elsewhere, tempting her with hay, leaves on a branch, a mud hole, and other items normally irresistible to Barbary sheep. Molly ignored every overture. Virga tried to habituate her to the flies, giving her grain when she grew calm, but the changes were too incremental for his liking.

Reluctantly, Virga prescribed Prozac. Within weeks, Molly began to eat more and to pal around with Bonnie. She no longer stood looking for insects. After months of work, Virga and Markley managed to ease her back into the flock.

Virga said that in the arid mountains of North Africa, where most aoudads live, Molly would have been eaten by a leopard or a caracal. “A lot of people might say that it is part of the natural order that Molly would have been eaten by a leopard, that it’s preferable to her being on display at a zoo,” he said. “Except I think that if you could ask her, Molly would tell you that she prefers not to be a leopard’s meal.”

VIRGA IDENTIFIED WITH animals from early on. Growing up in the suburbs of San Diego in the ’60s, his favourite pastime was hanging around nearby stables. Later, he got a summer job at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography, where he helped take care of sea lions. Mostly, Virga enjoyed being alone in nature, or with animals. “They understood me better than my family,” he says.

After graduating from veterinary school, Virga found a job at an animal clinic in Oregon. One night he had an epiphany while treating a retriever named Pongo, who had been hit by a car. Pongo’s pulse was weak, his eyes unfocused and his breathing laboured. The dog was dying. Virga looked in on him at 3am, after a busy



DOCTOR: Vint Virga. **PATIENT:** Molly, Barbary sheep.
AFFLICTION: extreme anxiety after tail amputation

emergency-room shift. If anything, Pongo's condition had worsened. Resigned, Virga filled out medical records while draping his other hand around the dog. Pongo's pulse grew stronger, and by the time the sun had come up, Pongo was nuzzling in Virga's lap and licking his hand.

There was no sound medical reason for Pongo's recovery. Virga couldn't escape the conviction that the physical contact and closeness had effected the sudden change. In the coming years, Virga began to notice similar recoveries. In 1994, he decided to leave general practice and eventually enrolled in a postgraduate animal-behaviour residency at Cornell University in New York.

A second epiphany happened at a zoo where he was a resident. He

was working with a clouded leopard who occupied a 3.5m by 7m space that contained little except a dead eucalyptus tree and a jungle mural. The leopard perched on the tree and stared ahead with a vacant expression.

Virga watched the leopard for hours, but could find nothing obviously wrong. "She had lost all interest in her world because it offered her nothing to do or to explore," he told me. "You could say that she was suffering from severe clinical depression."

He never managed to help her. "It just tore me apart," he says. "I was a lowly resident, and no-one there was inclined to listen to what I thought." The case made Virga determined to do what he could for zoo animals. He could not find a zoo that was looking to hire a behaviourist, so he began

to volunteer, eventually leaving his private practice and working with captive animals as a paid consultant.

I asked Virga to come with me to a large zoo. It was in the midst of a transition from old-fashioned habitats – the polar bear’s was little more than a concrete amphitheatre with a moat – to more considered ones. The brown bears nearby were playing in a



“THIS IS THE WORST THING I’VE SEEN IN A LONG TIME,” HE SAID FINALLY, THEN TURNED AWAY AND WIPED HIS EYES WITH HIS HAND

swimming hole, with trees and places to climb. Later, we found ourselves in front of two black panthers sitting on a bleached, horizontal tree trunk, in a space smaller than a one-room apartment. The panthers’ sleek bodies were contracted, and their expressions wan. Virga watched them for maybe 20 minutes. “This is the worst thing I’ve seen in a long time,” he said finally, then turned away and wiped his eyes with his hand.

Several staff members at Roger Williams Park Zoo told me that they felt uncomfortable talking about what their animals felt, especially in front of supervisors, though they

were convinced that their animals experienced thoughts and emotions.

“Most reasonable people will be on the side of animals being sentient creatures despite the absence of conclusive evidence,” Jaak Panksepp, a professor at Washington State University who has studied the emotional responses of rats, told me. “But scientists tend to be sceptics. And, in this field, it pays to be a sceptic if you want to get your research funded.”

Irene Pepperberg, a comparative psychologist at Harvard University who is known for her work with African grey parrots, recalls receiving comments from colleagues on an early grant proposal to study verbal comprehension in the parrots: “One of the notes was ‘What is this woman smoking?’”

Virga told me that he used to be timid about expressing his convictions. “But we get to a point in our careers when we say, this is what I feel. And now my job is to prove it.” He says that he could not be effective at his job without understanding animals as individuals with complex psychological lives.

IT IS SOBERING TO IMAGINE people at a zoo from the perspective of the animals. During a trip Virga and I took to Central Park Zoo in New York City, a boy stood by the side of an aquarium, pointing, and yelled “SEA LIONS!” approximately 37 times. There are regular ringside childcare meltdowns and hives of primary-

school students who stand around hollering at one another. Virga and I watched a man charge a red panda and nearly bayonet the animal with a camcorder-and-zoom-lens combo of early-microwave-oven dimensions.

I saw the fallout of such harassment when I visited Sukari, a 21-year-old Masai giraffe at Roger Williams. The giraffe had developed a fear of men with large cameras. Sukari also began refusing meals. Over the course of a few months, her weight dropped from 840kg to about 725kg. After a while, she wanted no part of the public side of the yard.

Virga suspected an underlying medical cause. Zoo vets examined her mouth for an abscess or an oral lesion, but nothing appeared to be amiss. Sukari was given antacids and painkillers, until colic was ruled out.

"With animals, we often don't know the reason for a behaviour," Virga said. "And searching for a cause can be a circular, time-consuming trap. The important thing is treating the symptoms." Virga spent entire afternoons with Sukari, offering different kinds of hay – pellets and cubes of cat's tail grass and alfalfa. He eased her closer to visitors and rewarded her each time with leafy branches, her favourite food. Often he simply spent time with the giraffe

and waited, remembering the lesson of Pongo: that the relationship itself was sometimes the best medicine. Gradually, Sukari's weight rose. Virga knew that he wasn't likely to cure her, but the giraffe's fear of cameras has continued to fade.

To feed Sukari, I walked up a steep staircase to a metal landing, just to be level with her head. Following instructions from Rachel McClung, one of Sukari's keepers, I offered her a branch covered with dagger-shaped leaves, and she licked it clean with her impressively long, pale tongue. Then her eye strayed toward the ceiling, and she quit chewing and slightly turned her head. Her eyes grew unfocused and an expression crossed her distracted face that could only be a passing thought. Or so it looked to me.

I also looked in on Molly, the Barbary sheep. She was standing on a rock, her posture vigilant, her horns back. Just then five or six visitors, young teenagers with Down syndrome, wandered into the exhibit. They looked at the animal with remarkable seriousness. "What is it thinking?" a girl in blue asked. Everyone stood looking, the teenagers at the aoudad and the aoudad at the teenagers, until Molly hopped down from the rock and darted away. **R**



UNDELIVERED LETTERS FROM HISTORY

Dear Michelangelo, His Holiness wants the ceiling plain magnolia emulsion.

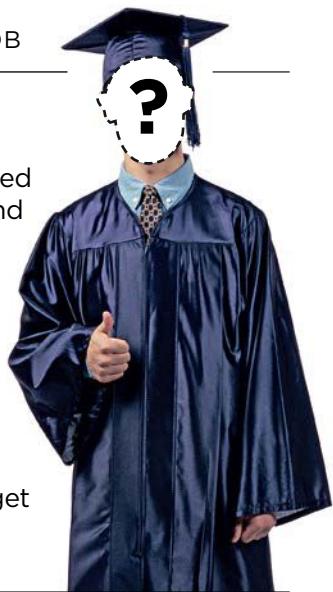
FROM I'M SORRY, I HAVEN'T A CLUE

All in a Day's Work

HUMOUR ON THE JOB

CAREER OPPORTUNITY

Looking for a job? Here's one that was posted on Craigslist recently: "\$40k a Year to Attend Harvard University as Me". Requirements include a 4.0 GPA in high school or a 3.5 GPA in college. Only males need apply, as the listing tells us "I have a male name". The lucky person tapped for the gig doesn't have to do much other than "attend all classes, pass all tests, and finish all assigned work while pretending you are me." Don't worry about having to actually get into the Ivy League school, though: "I've already taken care of that," he says.



DAILY GRIND

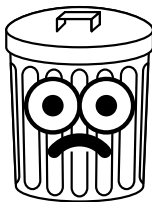
I recently asked a friend, "Has your son decided what he wants to be when he grows up?"

"He wants to be a rubbish collector," my friend said.

"That's an unusual ambition to have at such a young age," I managed to reply.

"Well," said the boy's father, "he thinks that rubbish collectors only work on Tuesdays."

Source: guy-sports.com



"Is everything OK?" the waitress asked.

"No," I replied. "The chicken is so tough, you can't cut it with a knife."

"I'm so sorry," she said. "Can I bring you a different knife?"

SUBMITTED BY JOHN CARLSON

PROBLEM SOLVED

I had just eaten the worst meal in my life and had to say something.

WHEN TO WALK

You know it's going to be a lengthy commute home at peak hour when your GPS asks if you want to switch to pedestrian mode.

SUBMITTED BY MARY-ELLEN FAIRBAIRN

Eight words that you never want to hear on a conference call: “Oh, that’s fine. We’ve still got another hour.”

@MEETINGBOY ON TWITTER

CURSE CORRECTION

After stepping out for a few minutes from the Grade 1 classroom where I teach, I returned to a chorus of children tattling: “Brendan said the B-word! Brendan said the B-word!”

Perplexed, I took Brendan into the hall and asked him to tell me what the B-word was. He answered by uttering the F-word.

Beginning the next day, I increased our phonics lessons.

SUBMITTED BY RONDA HENRY

EXCUSE YOU

If you were an auto insurer, would you have paid these actual claims?

- “In an attempt to kill a fly, I drove into a telephone pole.”
- “I didn’t think the speed limit applied after midnight.”
- “The car in front hit the pedestrian, but he got up so I hit him again.”

Source: businessball.com

NAME DROPPER

I was working in army security when a VIP from another base called to ask to whom he should address an important letter.

Knowing my tough-to-spell last



“This is a good spot. I’m getting a really strong signal.”

name would give him fits, I said, “Just put down Sergeant Gary, as my last name is too hard.”

The next day, I received a letter addressed to Sgt. Gary Toohard.

SUBMITTED BY G.C.

LENGTHY SUGGESTION

A student seeking a job at our university was handed an application. He dutifully filled out his name and address. When it came to the entry “length of residence,” he wrote: approximately 20 metres.”

SUBMITTED BY FRED KARN

👉 Got a good joke, anecdote or real-life gem to share? Send it in and you could win cash! See page 6 for details.

§

WHEN SOMEONE IS DYING

“What do I say?”
“How do I help?”
“What do they need?”

Here are six rules to follow

BY HELEN SIGNY



*The Gentle Truth
About Dying feature
from our June issue,
is now available on
our website. See
page 6 for details*



Sharing the last days and moments of someone you love can be confronting and scary, but also fulfilling and healing. Experts in end-of-life care share their advice on how to support loved ones on their final journey

1. KEEP IT REAL



People who are dying are mourning – the loss of their future, their sense of purpose and their relationships. “They experience an extreme sense of loss and aloneness,” says Leanne Skipsey, an expert in Death Literacy, who runs discussion groups for people to meet and talk about dying and death.

The dying person is integrating a whirlpool of emotions; you can offer support simply by being present and listening. If the person has a long illness, they may move from feelings of hope for a recovery through to acceptance. The best approach is to be open, honest and authentic, Skipsey says. “Sometimes the dying person is the only one who’s honest about the fact they are dying, and everyone else isn’t ready to come to that realisation. It’s really refreshing for a person who is dying to have people around who are able to be real with them.”

SUGGESTED WORDS:

- *“I don’t know what to say.”*
- *“I’m deeply saddened about your situation.”*
- *“I love you and I am here for you”*

● *“I’ll do what I can to help you to be comfortable and not suffer”*

2. HEALING DIFFICULT RELATIONSHIPS



There is nothing like the prospect of death to cut through the long term grievances that get in the way of people healing the rift. Yet the decision to repair a relationship must be a decision for the person who is dying and it’s important that you enable that to happen. “You won’t get this time back. Make that contact or you’ll regret you didn’t do it,” says Mary Waterford, coordinator of pastoral care at the hospice Clare Holland House. “It’s about offering yourself back into that relationship. Stand steady, feel the fear and do it anyway.”

Even if your contact is initially rejected, remember that he or she is dealing with a storm of feelings and emotions and may feel that facing you is just too hard. People who are dying are less able to deal with conflict, but

chances are they will want to reconnect and forgive or be forgiven. So don't be afraid to gently, carefully and compassionately create the opportunity for that to happen.

SUGGESTED WORDS:

● *"It's unfortunate we went through this situation, but I really want you to know that I love you and respect you."*

3. A DIFFICULT CONVERSATION



Often when a person is dying they find that everybody around them wants to change the subject for fear of upsetting them. Yet for them, being able to express what they are really feeling can be incredibly powerful. Simply being with the person and listening may be the greatest gift you can give.

Don't worry too much about finding the perfect words. Listen from a place of acceptance, compassion and non-judgement about what they need to express – whether it's sadness, exhaustion, anger, guilt, shame or loss of purpose.

Help them to remember and celebrate their life, to reflect on what has happened and to acknowledge it has all been worthwhile. Dying can be a very lonely experience, and often what people want to hear is that they will be loved and supported until the end.

"Begin to explore what's scaring

them," says Liz Arnott, a social worker at a children's hospice. "You can reassure them that the medical side of things will make them more comfortable, that they will be surrounded by people who love them and they're in a safe space."

SUGGESTED WORDS:

The four phrases identified by US palliative care physician Ira Byock as mattering most in our lives are especially important at the end:

- *"Please forgive me."*
- *"I forgive you."*
- *"Thank you."*
- *"I love you."*

4. MAKE MEMORIES



Symbolism will help you feel connected to your loved one in the future, so it's vital to take the time to create lasting memories while they are still alive. Ann-Marie Perry, a nurse specialist at a children's hospice, works with families whose children are terminally ill. She has found that often, following a death, families and friends can feel stressed that they haven't collected enough memories so they surround themselves with photos and memorabilia. But doing this can prevent them from moving on in their grief. Work on creating symbolic, simple memories – take a last

walk on the beach, have a family meal together, cut off a lock of hair.

"I remember once we had a baby come from intensive care to the hospice," says Perry. "We took her off all the equipment and put her in a bassinet, and her mother said it was the sweetest memory as she never thought she would see her child in a proper bassinet. It's about creating normal experiences and simple pleasures."

5. DEAL WITH THE PRACTICAL STUFF



Tying up loose ends is an important priority for people who are dying. You can help them find ways to express their regrets, contact others to say goodbye, and complete any other outstanding tasks before they die.

As they may not be able to advocate for themselves near the end, it's essential you know their wishes. Have a conversation about their values, their medical care choices, whether they wish to be resuscitated in an emergency, and how they want their last moments to be.

While you might not be able to ensure all of their wishes are met – for example, they may want to die at home but it isn't always possible – having the conversation will ensure you know what the person really values. It's also important to document this conversation so that everyone who is involved at the end is clear on what the dying person wants. A good way of doing this is to draw up an Advanced Care Directive, or "Living Will".

SUGGESTED WORDS:

● *"I love you and I want you to have control over what happens to you."*

SUGGESTED WAYS TO MAKE MEMORIES:

- Hand- and footprints on canvas (possibly of the whole family)
- Beautiful photos
- Buying presents for significant future celebrations
- Have the person write letters to important people in their life
- A clay mould of a fingerprint out of which you can make jewellery
- Discuss their wishes for the funeral: music, flowers, speeches
- Recordings of the dying person's voice
- Attach a message to a balloon and release it when the person dies

WHAT TO SAY...

When a friend loses a loved one, they can be overwhelmed by sorrow. Grief counsellor and psychotherapist Debbie Dunn says that grief is not a problem to be “fixed”, but a natural and necessary process to be supported.

“Being physically present and just listening is more powerful than anything you may try to say,” she adds. She also notes that it’s very possible to say the wrong thing, especially anything that minimises their loss.

But something is better than nothing, says Mark Vernon, author of *What Not to Say*: “The aim is not to say the right thing, it’s just to say something so the person you are with can talk.” Keep it simple, and then be ready to listen.

What Not to Say

“I know what you’re going through...”

“Call me if you need anything.”

“It will get better: time heals all wounds.”

“Don’t cry; cheer up.”

“Your loved one is waiting for you on the other side. It was meant to happen.”

“When this happened to me ...”

“Let’s not talk about it: it’s upsetting you too much.”

The Alternative

Validate a person’s feelings: “I can’t imagine what you’re going through, but I care and realise you are in pain.”

Take the lead. Suggest practical help. “Can I do the grocery shopping, or pick up the kids?”

Relate to how the person is feeling now: “It must be so difficult for you.”

Allow them to express their feelings: “Cry. It’s OK. I’m here for you.”

Be sensitive about people’s spiritual beliefs: “You’re in my thoughts” is more general.

Be prepared to listen and allow the person to speak: “When you’re ready to talk, I’m here to listen.”

Speaking about it helps it sink in. Each time a story is told, it changes the brain chemistry, so become a compassionate listener.

AFTER THE DEATH

Whatever your beliefs, taking the time to say goodbye to the person will help you start to manage your grief. Express your emotions and try to work through your feelings. If you've been caring for someone through a long illness, don't be surprised to feel some relief when you see them at peace. For some, the eventual death can still come as a great shock, even if they've anticipated it for a long time. Grieving is one of life's most stressful experiences so don't refuse offers of help. You will need to take care of yourself, just as you took care of your loved one. Connect with others who can understand what you are experiencing.

- ***"If you get so sick that you can't communicate, who should advise the doctors on your medical care?"***
- ***"What would be a desirable outcome of that care?"***
- ***"And what are the things you would like to tell your family?"***

6. AT THE END



As death draws closer, there are still important things you can do to help. See to their physical comfort by keeping their mouth moist, and not being afraid to touch them. Gently lift their arms and legs to help deal with the discomfort of lying still for long periods of time. If you know they like being massaged, then give it a go. You could play their favourite music or open the window so they can hear the birds. Make the

atmosphere feel as safe and relaxing as possible to keep the person calm.

Keep holding the person's hand and talking to them, even if it appears they cannot hear you. Associate Professor Bill Silvester, an intensive care specialist at Melbourne's Austin Hospital, says studies have shown that hearing is the last sense to disappear as people die.

"We teach ICU nurses who are caring for patients who are very sick to continue to talk to them even if we think they are deeply unconscious," Silvester says. "If there is a chance they can hear, we want them to be hearing things. It shows we are continuing to care for them for as long as possible."

SUGGESTED WORDS:

- ***"It's OK to die, I will be fine."***
- ***"Thank you for everything."***
- ***"I'm safe. It's OK for you to go."*** **R**

Quotable Quotes



It is more fun to be the painter than the paint.

GEORGE CLOONEY



A MOTHER IS NOT A PERSON TO LEAN ON BUT A PERSON TO MAKE LEANING UNNECESSARY.

DOROTHY C. FISHER, author

Captaincy is 90 per cent luck and ten per cent skill. But don't try it without that ten per cent.

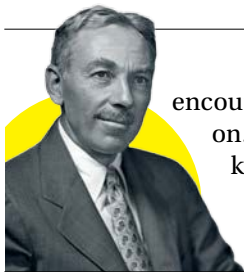
RICHE BENAUD,
Australian cricket legend

Art is how we decorate space; music is how we decorate time.

Quoted by **ALEX CLAY HUTCHINGS** *on reddit.com*

WHEN THE WHOLE WORLD IS SILENT, EVEN ONE VOICE BECOMES POWERFUL.

MALALA YOUSAFZAI, Nobel laureate



I am still encouraged to go on. I wouldn't know where else to go.

E.B. WHITE

The Eskimos had 52 names for snow because it was important to them; there ought to be as many for love.

MARGARET ATWOOD

IF YOU ARE DEPRESSED YOU ARE LIVING IN THE PAST. IF YOU ARE ANXIOUS YOU ARE LIVING IN THE FUTURE. IF YOU ARE AT PEACE YOU ARE LIVING IN THE PRESENT.

LAO-TZU, Chinese philosopher

Follow our expert tips to avert your own Facebook faux pas and improve your social media encounters

THE GOLDEN RULES OF FACEBOOK

BY RHEA SEYMOUR



7 THINGS TO NEVER DO ON FACEBOOK

X Use it as a Soapbox

Social media may not be the best forum for controversial subjects, says etiquette expert Louise Fox. “Political subjects are touchy, and things tend to look black or white on social media when there are no facial or vocal cues to assist people in interpreting your message.” If you are keen to share your religious or political views, tread lightly or you could find yourself “unfriended”.

That’s how Cathy, a 50-year-old university lecturer, plans to deal with a high school classmate who recently sent her a friend request. “He posts political rants two or three times a day, and it has rapidly become clear that I don’t share his views,” she says. “When I posted a link to a news story, he weighed in with a 500-word reply on my page. It was like he knocked on my door, and five minutes after I let him in, he was lecturing me.”

X Get Too Personal

Posting the gory details of a medical condition or photos from a drunken girls’ night could have lasting consequences, especially since our Facebook

networks often include business contacts. That’s what happened when Simone*, a 44-year-old marketing executive, accepted a Facebook friend request from a vendor she regularly worked with.

“He made gross comments and posted links to porn images,” she recalls. “I not only unfriended him, but his careless posts lost him my business.”

X Publicly Criticise a “Friend”

Posting your critique of a friend’s parenting style or sniping at a sibling on Facebook is a big no-no. “Some light teasing can be OK between people who know and understand each other fairly well,” says Fox. “But meanness or nitpicking with an audience is never appropriate. Someone could get very offended, and there are more productive ways to communicate in public.”

X Fish for Customers

Sophie*, a 30-year-old hotel concierge, recently “unfollowed” a friend who bombarded her with posts about the health products she’s selling. “She cluttered up my feed, and I’d get notification messages and click to find ads from her company. It was super-frustrating.”

It can also get you banished to the no-friend zone, according to a survey

**FACEBOOK
HAS OVER
1.39
BILLION
MONTHLY USERS**

by NM Incite, a social analytics venture company. “Trying to sell me something” was the third most cited reason for unfriending someone (behind “Offensive comments” and “Don’t know them well”). “Tapping your Facebook network for sales is an abuse of the friendship,” says Wendy Mencil, etiquette expert. “If you want to promote your business, it’s better to create a Facebook page for it so people can opt in or out.”

X Try to Keep Up With the Joneses

Most people present themselves in a favourable light on Facebook, and there’s nothing wrong with that. Like a 21st-century scrapbook, “Facebook is a forum for highlighting your

strengths and the good things that are happening in your life,” says psychologist, Phoenix Deerhawke.

When all you see on a friend’s page are upbeat posts and happy photos, it can make you feel like your life doesn’t measure up. The practice has been dubbed “fakebooking”, and it can affect you. Indeed, in a 2012 study in *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking*, sociologists found that among students who used Facebook, most agreed that their friends – even the ones they don’t know personally – were happier and had better lives.

If your time on Facebook brings you down, you may need to change your perspective: “Facebook is sort of like a movie trailer,” says Deerhawke. “You only see the best parts; you don’t see the whole story, the ending or the bloopers.” If your mood is negatively affected by looking at friends’ pages on Facebook, be mindful that they’re likely not posting unpleasant stuff that is happening to them, says Deerhawke. After all, who wants to keep souvenirs of – or take selfies on – their worst days?

X Use Tools to Manage Relationships

Facebook users average 338 friends, so chances are you’ve got people on your friends’ list that you barely know or don’t care about. But it can be tricky to turn down a friend request from your boss or hurtful if someone realises you’ve unfriended them. “Those friends belong on your

Facebook Restricted List," says social media expert Alexandra Samuel. "That way, they only see content you post to the public, not your friends, and they won't be aware they are missing out on stuff."

To create your Restricted List, click on the downward arrow in the right-hand upper corner of the blue Facebook bar. Click on Settings, then Blocking. You'll find the Restricted List under Manage Blocking. Click on Edit List on the right to add names.

If you're not interested in a friend's posts or they consistently annoy you but you don't want to unfriend them and you're OK with them seeing your posts, unfollowing them is another option. Right click on one of their posts and then click on Unfollow.

X Beg for Attention

We've all seen those mysterious posts meant to elicit concern or drum up sympathy, such as "This is the worst day of my life" or "I can't believe that happened". They may get the hoped-for response from some friends, but others see them as pathetic attempts to garner attention.

"Use your social intelligence when you're posting and ask yourself what your motivation is," says Fox. "Are you posting something that you really want other people to know about you? Or is it just self-serving, like seeking compliments for your latest selfie." If it's the latter, you may want to reconsider.

5 THINGS TO ALWAYS DO ON FACEBOOK

Use Your Face-to-Face Filter

People say and do things on Facebook that they'd never do in real life, such as pestering friends about prayer chains, forwarding obnoxious links or posting inflammatory political opinions. "When you're alone with your computer, it's easy to forget you're basically talking to a roomful of people," says Deerhawke. "Because you're a step removed and not face to face, that physical distance gives you the courage to say things you wouldn't in the real world." Before you post, ask


Ask yourself what
your motivation
is. Are you
posting
something that
you really want
other people to
know about you?

yourself if you'd say the same thing to a friend over coffee, says Mencil. "If you wouldn't say it to someone's face, don't post it."

✓ **Keep Your Bragging in Check**

Overdoing it with "me, me, me" posts about your endless accomplishments may be a turnoff for your friends. "My cousin posts about every 'A' her kids get at school and never stops talking about the cool designer clothes she buys or the amazing trips she takes," says Jane*, a 43-year-old mother of two. "Only the best stuff gets posted, which makes her life look too perfect and I know it isn't! She's my cousin so I can't unfriend her, but I have unfollowed her."

**890
MILLION
PEOPLE
LOG ONTO
FACEBOOK
DAILY**

With all of the bragging and posed selfies, you may wonder if some of your Facebook friends are narcissists, and some research suggests that may be a possibility. However, Deerhawke thinks friends who appear self-involved may just be lonely. "When you're moving through the world alone, it's easy to take a quick picture of your food or a selfie on your smartphone," she says. "When you post it and people 'like it,' you feel like they're with you, so Facebook creates a sense of community."

✓ **Group Friends by Shared Interests**

If you don't want to bore friends with weekly posts about your son's soccer wins or, worse yet, be bored yourself by a friend's daily posts of cat videos, create custom lists of your friends. For example, you could have an A-list of the friends you interact with most and list for friends with shared interests, such as dog lovers or foodies.

"I recommend parents have a 'kid-sharing' list of friends you trust with whom you're comfortable sharing identifiable info about your children and who might be interested in what you post about your kids," says Samuel. Lists will also make your time on Facebook more enjoyable: Rather than scrolling through posts from everyone on your newsfeed, you can scroll your custom lists so you don't miss the posts of the people you're most interested in. To create custom

“
Friends who
appear self
involved may just
be lonely ...
When you post
and people “like
it” you feel like
they’re with you

lists, click Friends on your home page, then Create List.

✓ **Consider Friend Requests Carefully**

If you're an employer, it's not fair to send friend requests to your employees on Facebook. "It's inappropriate because there's a power imbalance," says Mencil. "If you want to know more about them, connect with them on LinkedIn, which is a professional network."

As your kids reach adulthood, you may want to consider declining their friend requests or cutting them out of your network, for your sake as much as theirs. It was the right move for Karen*, a 55-year-old registered nurse. "My 23-year-old daughter friended me and looking at her partying photos and profane posts upset me and made me worry about what she was up to," she says. "Since I unfriended her, it's been much better for our relationship."

It was the perfect way to handle the situation, according to Deerhawke. "Developmentally, the job of a child at 18 or 19 is to form independence, and they're going to be doing really silly stuff," she says. "It's not appropriate to share that with your parents."

✓ **Be Sensitive About Sensitive Information**

"People now use social media like personal press releases," says Fox. It's one thing to announce a celebrity death on Facebook, but it's not an appropriate way to break up with someone or inform your relatives that a loved one has died. "It's too personal," says Fox. "In emotional situations, a face-to-face conversation or a phone call is more suitable."

** Names have been changed*

SOLUTIONS TO 21ST CENTURY PROBLEMS

I've crunched the numbers, and it's cheaper to start your own octopus farm than to buy retail printer ink. @FLYOVERJOEL

Life's Like That

SEEING THE FUNNY SIDE

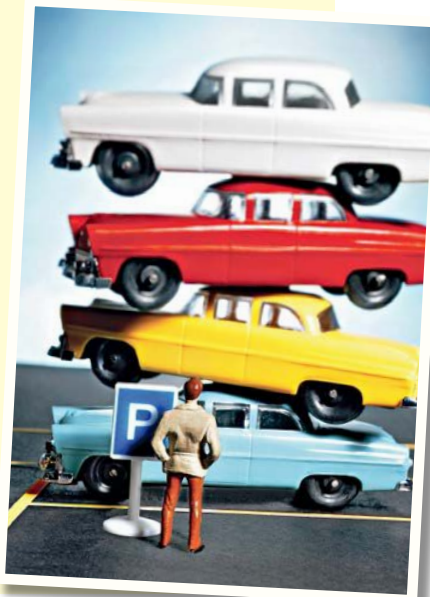
From the Archives

This letter from July 1951 describes a level of police politeness inconceivable by today's standards. That or a supremely dry sense of humour...

I am a salesman, and delays in prospects' offices have made me a connoisseur of parking tickets. The last in my collection is one from under my windshield wiper in a small Illinois town.

It read: "You are cordially invited to visit our comfortable and spacious Central Police Headquarters to discuss traffic problems that have arisen since you came to town. Cordially, Officer No. 2, Traffic Patrol."

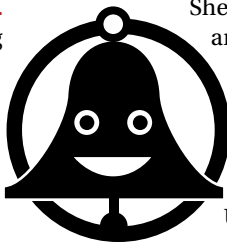
SUBMITTED BY NORMAN LAMB



YOUR FACE RINGS A BELL

My son and I were checking out a house he was interested in buying. When the owner came to the door, she looked at me and said, "Larry? I know you! We went to school together. I'm Elaine. Don't you recognise me?"

I drew a complete blank.



She took out our old yearbook and showed me her graduation picture – still nothing. "Let's look at your picture," she said.

She flipped the pages until she came to me. Under my photo I had written, "Elaine, I will never forget you."

SUBMITTED BY LAWRENCE. BRANT

PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES, THINKSTOCK

Autocorrect is like a drunk friend who interrupts you but makes no sense. "I was eating a sand..."

***"Sand dollar?"
Yeah, that's it.***

@CRISTELA9 ON TWITTER

POINTLESS EXERCISE

My husband bought an exercise machine to help him shed a few kilos. He set it up in the basement but didn't use it much, so he moved it to the bedroom. It gathered dust there, too, so he put it in the living room.

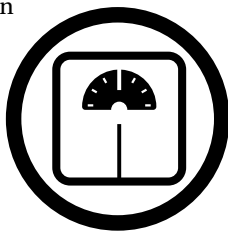
Weeks later I asked how it was going. "I was right," he said. "I do get more exercise now. Every time I close the drapes, I have to walk around the machine."

SUBMITTED BY PHYLLIS OLSON

RECEDING HEIRLINE

I took my four-year-old son, Brandon, to get a haircut. When the hairdresser finished, my son started crying and said he'd wanted it cut like his dad's - with a hole in the middle.

SUBMITTED BY SANDIE GIBSON-THORNDYKE



The Great Tweet-off: Dining Edition

Food, glorious food: essential to life, but on Twitter it just makes for great comedy. Feast on these delicious tidbits...

I'm not good at cooking, but I'm good at being around when food appears.

@ROBERTBUSCEMI

If I worked at a pizza place I would use pepperoni to spell out "Marry me?" on pizzas all the time just to make things awkward for couples.

@NICKSHUG

If you think eggplant is good, you should try any other food, it's much better.

@JAKEANDAMIR

Most people don't realise this, but you can eat organic, gluten-free food without telling everyone around you.

@JENNYJOHNSONHIS

"You just ate Chinese food, am I right?" - The world's worst fortune cookie.

@SADMONSTERS

I hate when I try to order a salad and my mouth says, "I'll have a double quarter pounder with cheese."

@JIMGAFFIGAN



Here's relief: best advice and breakthrough treatments, from the world's leading experts

Oh, MY BACKO



BY ANITA BARTHOLOMEW

Renate Mangold, 57, spent long hours sitting at her office desk, her back often aching in protest. Pain would come in waves, then subside. She learned to ignore it.

Then, in 2010, after she'd been bopping around the dance floor at her niece's wedding, the backaches started to linger longer. When she whizzed off on a business trip later that year, pains shooting through her lower back punctuated her timetable of meetings. She ignored them and carried on.

PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK



At last, it was time for a weekend at a spa – the perfect place, it seemed, for this book editor to get the pampering her back sorely needed. On Sunday night she snuggled under the covers, relaxed and happy. And woke the next morning in such agony, she couldn't get up again.

"[My partner] helped me out of bed, helped me to dress myself, and called the doctor," recalls Renate.

She visited her orthopaedic specialist who gave her the bad news: a herniated (slipped) spinal disc was causing her back problem. And it could no longer be ignored.

Why Do We Get Back Pain?

People have always had backaches, but our modern lifestyles, especially work that involves sitting and staring at computer screens all day, add to the abuse that age and injury can do to the vertebrae, muscles and discs.

"We're usually slouchy," says Dr Kristopher Karvelas, a physical rehabilitation specialist at the Spine Center at Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center in North Carolina. "Poor posture can lead to stresses on the spine that, with time, cause pain."

Estimates vary, but hardly anyone escapes having at least one backache – about half of us will suffer in any given year. And, as Renate learned, ongoing back problems are often "discogenic", meaning they involve the spinal discs.

"Discogenic pain is the main cause of back pain in people aged 30 to 60

years old," says Professor Maarten van Kleef, head of the Pain Management Department of the Maastricht University Medical Centre in The Netherlands.

MRI Can Mislead

Discs are little cushion-like cartilage structures that pad the spaces between the interlocking bones (vertebrae) of your spine. Comprising a tough exterior and a softer, gel-like interior, your discs act as shock absorbers for the demands you make on your spine as you walk, sit, run, lift.

Eventually, that stress can cause the outer layer of one or more of the discs to crack, allowing the inner gel-like substance to leak. That pain you feel from a slipped disc might not come from the crack itself. Instead, it might be because the part of the disc that's pushing out is pressing on a nerve. At times, leaking material causes inflammation in surrounding tissue, which can also cause pain. In addition to back and leg pain, nerve impingement often causes numbness and tingling in the legs, and may even cause bladder and bowel dysfunction.

Since a slipped disc can be seen on CAT or MRI scans, you might assume that diagnosis is a straightforward matter. But that's not really so, say the experts Reader's Digest spoke with.

Dr Charles Argoff, neurologist and the director of the Comprehensive Pain Center at the Albany Medical Center, New York, explains why.

Although he has no back pain, "There's a 50 per cent likelihood that if you did an MRI of my lower back, I'd have a herniated disc." He points to a 1994 study that found that half those over the age of 30 given MRIs had herniated discs. But they weren't necessarily the ones who reported aching backs.

"We have to be very careful not to over-interpret the MRI or CAT scan findings," says Argoff. Not all herniated discs cause symptoms; and not all backaches are caused by herniated discs.

Other factors – from a simple muscle pull to serious ailments such

Avoid Staying in Bed

After prescribing pain medication, Renate's doctor sent her to a rehabilitation centre for three weeks. While there, "I got physiotherapy, water therapy, and I learned how to relax."

It helped, but not as much as she'd hoped, so Renate joined a fitness centre that has exercise equipment specifically designed to combat back problems. She credits her exercise routine with bringing her greater, if not complete, relief.

"Often we fear that patients with lower-back pain will be told by friends or family, 'You should take it easy, rest

NOT ALL BACKACHES ARE CAUSED BY HERNIATED DISCS, SO DOCTORS USUALLY RULE OUT ALL OTHER CAUSES FIRST.

as a spinal infection, kidney stones, bone spurs, tumours or illness involving one of the major organs – might be causing back distress. So physicians typically won't rely solely on imaging; most also conduct a thorough physical exam to rule out other possible causes.

However, if the pain occurs in the middle of the back rather than the right or left side, or if pain increases when you come back up from bending forward, "That might be an indication that the person has discogenic low back pain," says van Kleef.

in bed,'" says Dr M. Fahad Khan, an assistant professor of anaesthesiology at Langone Medical Center in New York. But, he says, that's probably the worst advice you could get. "That will promote atrophy of the muscles and cause more problems in the long term."

Surgery – a Last Resort

So why not just get surgery and permanently solve your back problem?

According to a World Health Organization (WHO) report, the

specific cause of back pain is often unclear. What if your herniated disc isn't the true source of your pain? In that case, disc surgery won't work, say the experts. "It's not uncommon for us to see patients who have persistent back pain after having spine surgery," says Khan. "We call it failed back surgery syndrome."

Khan's recommendation: "Go through the gamut of minimally invasive intervention techniques we have, such as epidural steroid injections, to help alleviate that pain before going through a major surgery."

Sometimes, of course, surgery is warranted. That can be true when symptoms don't improve despite treatment, including worsening or new pain, worsening numbness or weakness in the legs, or any bowel or bladder function changes. Any of these symptoms might indicate that a disc is pressing on a nerve, says Khan.

One day in 1999, strapping Magnus Sall of Stockholm, Sweden, thought nothing of helping a friend move a heavy chest of drawers up a flight of stairs. But that evening, as Magnus leaned over the sink to brush his teeth, sharp pains shot through his back and down his left leg. The healthy young journalist expected the problem to go away, and tried to tune out the ache.

But over the next two weeks his backache got progressively worse. Jolts of pain accompanied each step of the short walk to his doctor's office.

Like Renate, Magnus had suffered a herniated disc. And like her, he was referred for physiotherapy and given exercises to increase strength in his back and abdomen – the core muscles.

"I started to get better over the years," says Magnus, now 45. "It wasn't such a big problem anymore."

Then, in 2010, his back suddenly got worse again. He tried all the conservative treatments that had helped in the past. Nothing worked. "I had a new slipped disc which kept me away from work for weeks," he says.

His new doctor recommended a discectomy – surgery to remove the part of the disc that was causing the pain. "It made me a little bit depressed to start all over again," recalls Magnus, who got the surgery in February 2012. But now, he's glad he did it. "It helped a lot. I'm not free from my symptoms. My left leg hurts a bit. But it's much more stabilised now."

Magnus must still exercise regularly, and use a sit-stand desk. "If I sit in a chair for hours and not do any exercise, it gets worse."

A 2011 analysis of worldwide studies comparing surgery to more conservative care found that those operated on do recover more quickly. After a year or two, however, all patients reported similar levels of pain relief. This supports the experts' recommendations that only those like Magnus, who get no relief from conservative treatment, should go under the surgeon's knife.

Work on Prevention

With almost all of us at risk of backache, it makes sense to take prevention seriously. To help prevent back problems, stay active, but don't overdo it. Most important, says Karvelas, is an exercise programme that keeps core muscles strong.

"I tell patients, just as you do cardio exercises to protect your heart for your whole life, so should you do spine care."

An ergonomically designed workspace can also help to keep your back in shape, says Karvelas. Your desk should ideally be one that allows you to



JUST AS CARDIO EXERCISES PROTECT YOUR HEART, IT'S IMPORTANT TO KEEP CORE MUSCLES STRONG FOR BACK HEALTH.

alternate between sitting and standing – with standing the preferred position.

When you do sit, he says, "You'd want a chair with a nice curve for your lumbar spine, so your back is firmly against it, and you're upright with your shoulders against it, too." The position of your monitor is also important. "Your screen should be at eye level."

Excess kilos put a strain on the back, so maintaining a healthy weight is important. If you smoke, stop. Some doctors believe that smoking inhibits nutrients from reaching the spine.

For those who are already feeling that awful ache, most healthcare providers first recommend exercise, guided initially by a physiotherapist, even for those who eventually get surgery. Exercise can train the muscles to hold the back in a position that reduces stress on the spine and discs.

Routine physical activity "is probably the best advice I could give," to those with back pain, says Khan. Light strength training, stretching, walking, swimming, water aerobics, tai chi, and yoga all fall into this category, but as always, you should

first work with a professional who can determine if certain moves might do you more harm than good. Yoga and other stretching programmes have been found to be about equally effective at reducing symptoms.

Acupuncture, often recommended for pain, might yield disappointing results. A German study published in 2007 compared real to sham acupuncture and found the real thing effective for about 48% of patients, the

spinal cord stimulation is only now coming into its own as a promising treatment for back pain – especially pain that persists despite surgery.

“We implant two electrical leads in the low back, near the spinal cord,” he explains. “They create an electrical signal that helps to mask the pain signals being produced by the low back and the legs.”

According to Professor Bart Morlion, pain management special-

WHEN YOU SIT, YOU WANT A CHAIR WITH A NICE CURVE FOR YOUR LUMBAR SPINE, SO YOUR BACK IS FIRMLY AGAINST IT

sham effective for about 44%. A 2001 study that compared acupuncture to therapeutic massage, found massage far more effective at pain relief.

Medications such as non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs like aspirin or ibuprofen, gabapentin (an anti-convulsant used for pain), opiates, oral corticosteroids and anti-depressants are all used for temporary symptom relief. Paracetamol/acetaminophen, while often recommended, was found in a recent study to be less effective.

Promising New Treatments

A range of avenues remain:

Spinal Cord Stimulation First thought of in the 1950s, according to Khan,

is at the University Hospitals Leuven, Belgium, spinal cord stimulation is one of the useful tools against back pain. However, he faces an international problem in his European practice: “because of cost issues, this can only be offered to patients after failure of classic therapies.” Once implanted, the therapy provides life-long relief.

Medical Marijuana Long a folk remedy for all sorts of aches and complaints, marijuana, or cannabis, has been shown to reduce the need for opiates for the treatment of chronic pain.

Khan says one of the compounds

in marijuana (cannabidiol) appears to be effective against certain types of nerve pain – making it a good potential treatment for disc problems.

Personalised Medicine In virtually every study of every remedy for anything that ails us, some people are helped by a particular treatment while others are not. Why? Because we're individuals, not statistics, says Argoff. And sometimes individuals need customised health solutions.

Our individual skin cells might give us the answer where pain is concerned. Your skin cells produce chemical changes when they encounter something painful. By noting when your individual cells' pain chemistry shuts on or off, researchers hope to predict more accurately which treatment will alleviate your pain – “without all the trial and error,” says Argoff.

Ozone Therapy Although this

minimally invasive procedure is still considered experimental, physicians in Italy, China, and India have had success with it. Clinical trials are now underway in Canada. A 2014 review article found that when ozone (a component of air) is injected into the gel-like centre of a slipped disc, it causes it to shrink enough to relieve the pressure that's causing pain.

Morlion notes that because it is considered an alternative treatment, “In some countries it is offered in private settings without [insurance] reimbursement.”

WHILE FEW OF US will escape back pain in our lifetimes, most of us can protect ourselves by keeping our core muscles in shape, and keeping our workspaces ergonomically sound. For those of us who already murmur, “Oh, my back,” there are many good treatments now, and excellent possibilities to keep our spines healthy in the future. **R**



IN HIS DEFENCE

“In a story ‘Britain’s Biggest Whinger’ we stated that Marcus Stead, who appeared in the Channel 4 documentary *The Complainers*, ‘moans to the council every day for a year’. Mr Stead says that, in fact, the number of complaints is closer to one or two per week. We are happy to put his position on record.”

WWW.POYNTER.ORG

20 Things Cyber Crooks

Don't Want You to Know

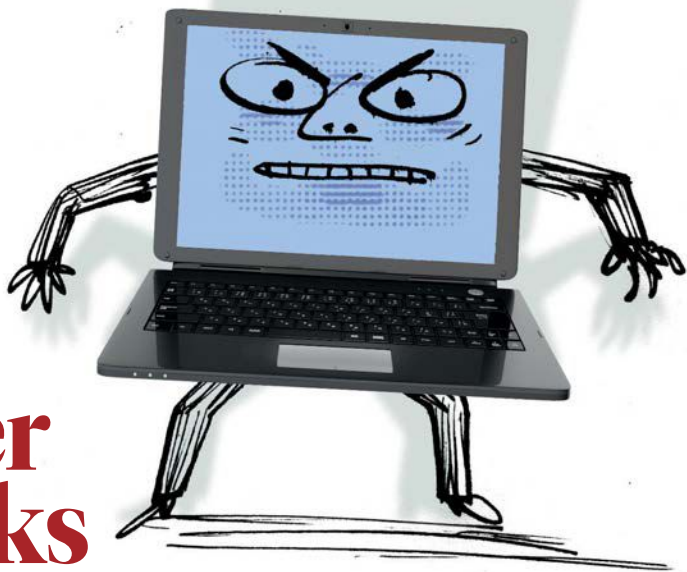
BY MICHELLE CROUCH

1 WE SEND INCREDIBLY PERSONAL EMAILS

Spear phishing, the act of sending targeted emails to get you to share financial information or passwords, can be exceptionally sophisticated. "The old-style ones had spelling and punctuation errors, but today, it has really become an art," says Mark Pollitt, former chief of the FBI's computer forensic unit. "They may call you by name, use your professional

title, and mention a project you're working on."

OUTSMART US: Spot phishing emails by looking for incorrect or unusual URLs (hover over links to see the actual URL address), requests for personal information or money, suspicious attachments, or a message body that's actually an image. Unless you're 100% confident that a message is from someone you know, don't open attachments or click links.



2 WE'VE GOT ALL THE TIME IN THE WORLD

Hackers have programs that systematically test millions of possible passwords. "They go to sleep and wake up in the morning, and the program is still going, testing one password combination after another," says Peter Fellini, a security engineer with Zensar Technologies, an IT and software services firm.

OUTSMART US: Instead of a password, try a *passphrase*. Use letters and characters from a phrase and include special characters, numbers, and upper- and lowercase letters (*Mary had a little lamb* could become *mh@ll*, for example). Or consider a password manager that generates and remembers random, difficult-to-crack passwords. (Even then, some experts recommend unique passphrases for financial accounts in case the password manager gets hacked.)

3 WE SNEAK WHILE YOU SURF

A growing number of cyberattacks are arriving via "drive-by download," says Giovanni Vigna, a computer science professor at the University of California at Santa Barbara and cofounder of anti-malware provider Lastline Inc. "You visit what looks like a perfectly harmless website," he says, "but in the background, you are redirected to a series of other sites that send you an attack." Often even the website's owner doesn't know the site has been compromised. Although

search engines keep blacklists of known malicious sites, the bad sites are continuously changing.

OUTSMART US: Make sure you install all available updates to your browser, or use a browser that automatically updates, like Firefox. Vigna's research has found that Internet Explorer users are most vulnerable to these attacks.

4 WE CAN INFILTRATE YOUR BABY MONITOR OR SMART TV

Remember, your smart device is essentially a computer – and chances are, it's not a particularly secure one. Anything in your house that's connected to the Internet, from your smart fridge to your climate-control system, can be hacked. In several recent incidents, hackers were able to hijack a baby monitor and yell at a baby. Experts have also shown how hackers can turn on a smart TV's camera and spy on you.

OUTSMART US: When setting up smart devices, always change the default password. Most of these devices work from your wireless router, so password protecting your Wi-Fi can also help. Keep up with firmware updates; many devices will inform you when there's an update available. Otherwise, look for an Update Firmware option in the main menu or settings.

5 WE EAVESDROP ON FREE PUBLIC WI-FI NETWORKS

Even if you're connected to a legitimate public network, a "man-in-the-

middle” attack can allow hackers to snoop on the session between your computer and the hotspot.

OUTSMART US: Avoid public Wi-Fi if possible, especially unsecured networks without passwords, advise security experts at MetLife Defender, a personal data-protection program. Instead, set up your smartphone as a secure hotspot or sign up for a VPN (virtual private network) service. If you must use public Wi-Fi, avoid financial transactions and consider using a browser extension like HTTPs Everywhere to encrypt your communications.

6 WE LURE YOU WITH “AMAZING” VIDEOS ON FACEBOOK

A friend just posted a video of an “unbelievable animal found in Africa.” If you click to watch, you’re asked to download a media player or take a survey that will install malware on your computer, says Tyler Reguly, manager of security research at the cybersecurity firm Tripwire. It also shares the video with all your friends.

OUTSMART US: Type the video’s title into Google and see if it’s on YouTube. If it’s a scam, someone has probably already reported it.

7 WE TAKE ADVANTAGE OF YOUR TYPOS

Fake sites with slightly altered URLs like micrososft.com look surprisingly similar to the real site you meant to visit, but they’re designed to steal your

data or install malware on your computer.

OUTSMART US: Double-check the site’s address before logging in with your name and password, especially if the home page looks different. Check that there’s *https* in the address before typing in your credit card information.

8 WE CRACK YOUR PASSWORD ON “EASY” SITES

A 2014 study found that about half of us use the same password for multiple websites, making a cybercrook’s job easy. “A hacker will break into a soft target like a hiking forum, get your email address and password, and then go to your email account and try to log in with the same password,” says Marc Maiffret, chief technology officer at BeyondTrust, a security and compliance management company. “If that works, they’ll look to see if you have any emails from a bank. Then they’ll go to your bank account and try that same password.”

OUTSMART US: Use two-factor

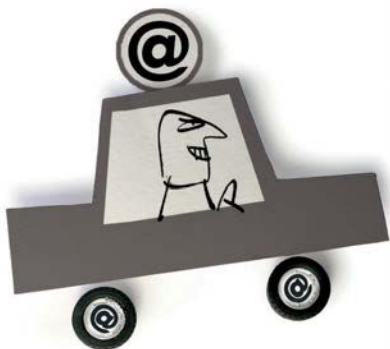


authentication, a simple feature that requires more than just your username and password for you to log on. In addition to your password, for example, a site may require you to enter a randomly generated code sent to your smartphone to log in. Many companies – including Facebook, Google, Microsoft, Apple, and most major banks – now offer some version of this safeguard. (For a list of US-based companies, visit twofactorauth.org. Click Docs next to a name to find out how to set it up for that business.)

9 WE LOVE YOUR BLUETOOTH HEADSET

If you leave the Bluetooth function enabled after using a hands-free headset, hackers can easily connect to your phone, manipulate it, and steal your data.

OUTSMART US: Always turn Bluetooth off after you use it. Set your visibility to “off” or “not discoverable,” and require a security code when you pair with another Bluetooth device.



10 WE CAN EASILY BREAK INTO ROUTERS THAT USE WEP ENCRYPTION

Many older routers still rely on a type of encryption called WEP (Wired Equivalent Privacy), which can easily be cracked with a widely available software program that anyone can download.

OUTSMART US: Make sure your router uses WPA2 (Wi-Fi Protected Access 2), the most secure type of encryption, or at least WPA. Click your computer's wireless network icon to check the security type. If your router doesn't give you one of those choices, call your router manufacturer to see if you need to do a firmware update – otherwise, plan to get a new router. Don't forget to change your preset Wi-Fi password, since any good hacker knows the default passwords for all major routers.

11 WE IMPERSONATE TRUST-WORTHY COMPANIES

You may get a fake financial warning from your bank or credit card company, order confirmation from a retailer, or social networking invitation.

OUTSMART US: Remember, most companies never ask you outright for your account information. You can sometimes spot this type of scam by hovering over the address in the From field or by hitting Reply All and looking for misspellings or strange addresses. Also, check to see that the email was sent to you and only you. If

you're not sure it's legit, call the company to check.

12 WE DEBIT TINY AMOUNTS – AT FIRST

Cyberthieves may test-drive a stolen card number by running a small charge under \$10 to see if anyone notices.

OUTSMART US: Check your transactions online regularly – even daily. If you spot a charge you don't recognise, report it immediately to your card issuer.

13 WE HACKED THAT ATM YOU JUST WITHDREW CASH FROM

Crooks install cleverly disguised “skimmers” to steal your card information, while a hidden camera or a thin skin over the keypad captures your PIN.

OUTSMART US: Try to use ATMs inside banks, where it's tougher for criminals to install these devices, and inspect the machine carefully before you use it. “Whenever I use an ATM, I give the area where you insert the card a little tug to make sure it's secure and is really a part of the machine,” Fellini says.

14 WE COUNT ON YOU DOWN-LOADING OUR FREE, FAKE VERSIONS OF POPULAR APPS

These apps steal confidential information or bypass your phone's security settings and subscribe you to premium services. “You choose the

free version of a game, it asks for all sorts of access, and you say ‘yes, yes, yes’ to all the permissions,” Vigna says. “The next thing you know, it's sending premium SMS text messages and stealing your money.”

OUTSMART US: Before installing an app, check the ratings and number of people who have installed it – hackers can fake positive ratings, but they can't stop other posters from warning that the app is a trick. Most fake apps have to be downloaded straight from a website, so make sure you always download from an official market like Google Play or Apple's App Store.

15 WE LOVE THAT YOU ALWAYS LEAVE WI-FI ON

Though it's convenient to leave Wi-Fi turned on while travelling with your laptop, tablet, or smartphone, your device will constantly try to connect to known networks. Attackers can identify those and set up rogue networks that impersonate them.

OUTSMART US: Get in the habit of turning Wi-Fi off on your portable devices when you leave home with them.

16 WE FOOL YOU WITH BOGUS SOFTWARE UPDATES.

You know you're supposed to update your software to protect it, but hackers may send you fake updates that actually install malicious backdoor programs on your computer.

OUTSMART US: If you get a pop-up

message about an update, go to the software provider's actual website and check to see if it's real. You can also try closing your browser to see if the pop-up disappears – if it does, it may be a fake.

17 WE CAN CRACK SUPPOSEDLY SAFE RETAILERS

Experts say big brands will continue getting hacked until retailers can better protect their data. Hackers sell

your information on the black market, and other criminals then use it to make counterfeit cards that can be used for shopping.

OUTSMART US: Don't save your financial information when you shop online – check out as a “guest” when you can. If you fall prey to an attack, ask your bank to issue you a new credit card, take advantage of any credit monitoring that's offered, and scrutinise your statements.



SAFETY IN REAL LIFE

Neither readers nor celebrities are exempt from cyber crime. Here are some tips to stay safe

18 Try not to apply for credit cards online. Credit card companies require a raft of personal details. Once you put them out there, it's out there forever.

CHRISTINE MUMPER, via email

19 Avoid debit cards – they allow hackers much easier access to bank accounts than credit cards do. Also, when logging in to an online account, never check the box that says “Remember me”. It takes only a couple of seconds to type in your username and password each time, and you don't want that information “remembered”.

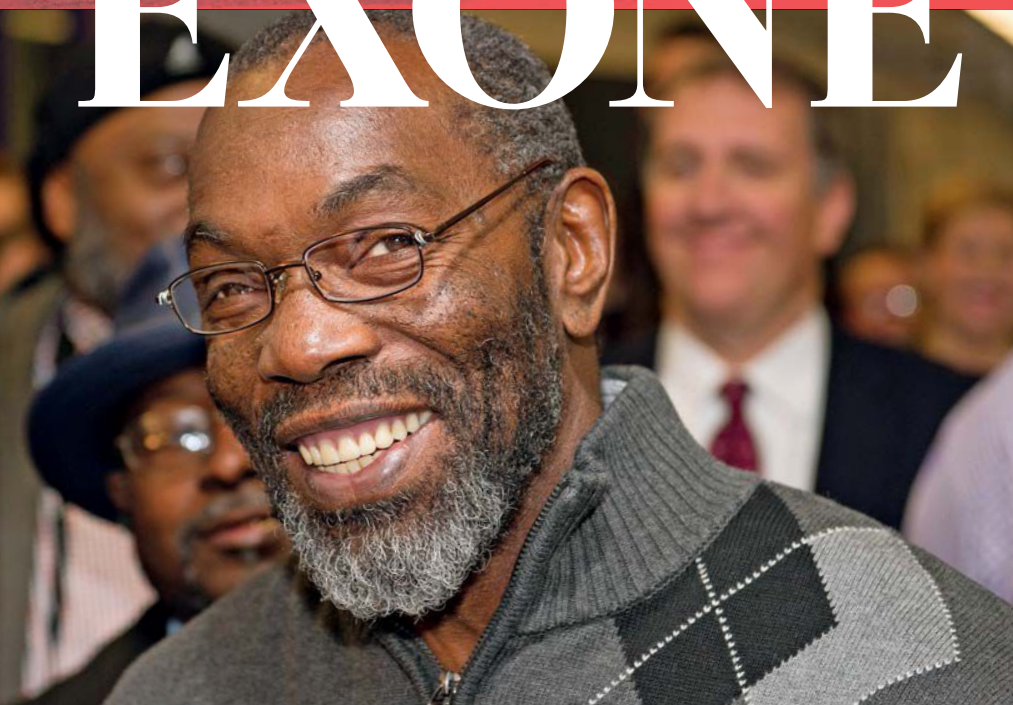
RICK KANE, Collettsville, North Carolina

20 Even your traditional account details aren't safe online. In 2008, controversial media figure Jeremy Clarkson posted his bank account details in a newspaper column, ranting that it was perfectly fine and we were all too obsessed with privacy. A savvy reader assembled enough of Clarkson's information from public sources to set up a direct debit to a British charity from the account. Chastened, Clarkson admitted his mistake. And changed his details. **R**

(Clockwise from top left) The crime scene; after they were all released, Wiley Bridgeman, Ronnie Bridgeman, and Ricky Jackson, who served the most time

Diet Rite Cola
FAIRMOUNT CUT-RATE
GROCERIES...
BEER • WINE TO GO!

EXONE





TRUE CRIME

A crime, a lie, life sentences – and vindication, ending the longest wrongful incarceration in American history

BY KYLE SWENSON
FROM CLEVELAND SCENE

RATED

BEFORE THEY THREW HIM IN CHAINS, he was a gutsy kid with wandering feet.

The Cleveland Museum of Art was a favourite. He'd go alone, even though he was only six. Entry was free, and Ricky Jackson's shoes would squeak down the marble hallways hung with Dutch masters and Monets. He always stopped in the armour gallery to look at the polished knights; here was a world as strange as the places on *Star Trek*, the show his stepfather watched on TV.

He kicked around the streets too. He'd jump on the bus and go as far as his change took him. His family – mother, stepdad, two brothers, and a sister – moved as well, from house to house, and eventually they ended up on Arthur Avenue.

One house down was a family with a son around Ricky's age. Ronnie was a kid so tiny that everyone called him Bitzie, as in itsy-bitsy. Bitzie's older brother, Wiley, was known as Buddy. As teens, the trio became inseparable, playing chess and tooling around in Buddy's car.

By the mid-1970s, Ricky was punching in regularly at a restaurant. Bitzie was doing shifts as a porter, and he'd completed training in welding. Wiley was in the National Guard and working at a clothing store. They were good kids easing into that age when they were starting to figure it all out.

That life came to a close in the autumn of 1975, when Ricky Jackson, Ronnie and Wiley Bridgeman were sentenced to death. A salesman had been robbed at a corner store, shot,

and killed. The police said Ronnie and Ricky beat the man, before Ricky pulled the trigger and Wiley drove them away. No physical evidence linked them to the crime, but a witness, 12-year-old Edward Vernon, told police he'd seen it all.

Ricky, Ronnie, and Wiley were 18, 17, and 20 years old, respectively. They were innocent – but it would take nearly 40 years to prove it.

The Chance Encounter

IN NOVEMBER 2001, the past hit Edward Vernon like a falling anvil. He was at the desk at the City Mission, checking the IDs of the homeless men shuffling in. He overheard a stranger explaining he'd just paroled out after 25 years for a 1975 murder he didn't commit. When the man showed his ID, Vernon stared at the name: Wiley Bridgeman.

By 2001, Vernon's life was straightening out. His adult years had been clouded by cocaine and marijuana; he did jail time after a drug bust. But that was behind him. Now here was Wiley,

PREVIOUS SPREAD, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: COURTESY CLEVELAND SCENE; JOHN KUNTZ/THE PLAIN DEALER/LANDOV MEDIA (2); PHIL LONG/AP PHOTO

one of the three he'd sent to prison, in front of him a quarter century later.

The next day, Vernon approached Wiley in a group therapy session, blubbering. Wiley told Vernon they should go to a TV station and be interviewed together. Vernon wasn't so sure. He kept his distance, and Wiley moved into an apartment. After an argument with his parole officer in 2002, Wiley went back to prison. As far as Vernon was concerned, the door had swung shut on the past again.

A Changed Man

HOME WAS THE last place Ronnie Bridgeman wanted to go when he paroled out in 2003. (Because he was identified as the shooter, Ricky had difficulty getting parole.) "Cleveland was no longer my town," Ronnie said recently. "It represented everything that was ugly and hurtful. It had nothing to do with the people I knew per se, but it was the people who were supposed to protect and serve. They ruined it for me."

Inside, he'd converted to Islam and changed his name to Kwame Ajamu. "I decided Ronnie Bridgeman should be left there in prison," he says. Returning home made that hard. "Every day of my life, it seemed like I would run into someone from my past, someone who knew Ronnie Bridgeman but who didn't know Kwame Ajamu."

He put together a life. He married a woman named LaShawn in 2004;

he found work at the County Board of Elections. Things were good, but the past kept tugging at him. "For a long time, I just felt like I had abandoned those guys because they had let me out," Kwame said. "It was killing me, man. That motivated me every day."

He called people from the old neighbourhood, asking if they remembered anything about the 1975 incident, and contacted lawyers about mounting a challenge to the convictions. Lawyers, however, cost money, which Kwame didn't have.

I was a writer at *Cleveland Scene*, the city's alternative newsweekly, when a lawyer told me about Kwame. I went to meet him one day at a coffee shop. He was sitting with thousands of pages of court documents in a neat stack.

I expected anger from someone who'd been wrongly put away, but Kwame had learned to metabolise the injustice. He was remarkably empathic, even about Edward Vernon. "He was just a kid then," he said.

As Kwame explained it, the testimony that led to their convictions went as follows: on May 19, 1975, Vernon claimed he'd left school early and boarded a city bus home. When he arrived, he saw Ricky and Ronnie struggling with Harold Franks outside the Fairmount Cut-Rate store. They splashed the man with acid and beat him before Ricky shot him twice. The two sped off in a green car, which Vernon said he'd seen Wiley driving earlier.

All lies, Kwame said. On the day of the crime, he and Ricky played basketball in the morning, then spent the afternoon at the chessboard, until they heard there was trouble at the corner store. Wiley was washing his car outside. The boys went to see what was going on.

I did six months of reporting, which backed up Kwame's account. I found witnesses who said they were with Vernon when he was supposedly witnessing the crime. Others remembered being with the Bridgemans and Ricky at the time they were allegedly robbing the store. None of them were approached by the police during the investigation nor had any of them come forward with their information.

My reporting showed that the men's convictions were based on Vernon's improbable, inconsistent testimony. Vernon, however, did not want to talk. "As far as I'm concerned, it's a done deal," he said in 2011 after I finally tracked him down.

Months of work built up to June 8, 2011, the day of my story's publication. Then, nothing. Ricky and Wiley were still inside. "It actually crushed me," Kwame said.

A Reckoning

CLEVELAND'S EMMANUEL Christian Centre is one of the steady pulses of life in an area of gutted blocks. Vernon has bowed his head there on Sundays for the past six years. Pastor Anthony Singleton, a lanky, dapper

man of God, likes to park himself in the lives of his 200 or so parishioners. As soon as Vernon began attending, Singleton struck up a relationship. Drink, smoke and vulgarity never passed Vernon's lips, and he knew his Scriptures and ministered to the sick. Still, "there was always this black cloud over him," Singleton said.

Bad luck dogged the man. "In a two-year period, he lost, like, two cars and three jobs," the pastor said. "I'm just saying to myself, 'This is not making any sense.'" Then there was the crying. Vernon often burst into tears at services. During the year, Singleton held all-nighters of spiritual searching, where Vernon wept dusk to dawn.

One day Singleton answered the phone in his office. I was asking to speak to Vernon. Singleton said he'd relay my message, and he was curious about why I was calling. He asked Vernon and got the brush-off.

After my story appeared, Singleton read it. When he tried to nudge Vernon into talking, Vernon refused. Singleton knew he couldn't push it with his parishioner. But he also couldn't leave it alone.

In early 2013, Vernon was hit with high blood pressure that put him in the hospital. During the same period, an attorney from the Ohio Innocence Project called Singleton, asking to speak with Vernon about the 1975 case. One Sunday after church, Singleton trekked to the hospital and found Vernon alone. "I have something to

talk to you about," the pastor said. "I've been praying about it and watching you." He explained to Vernon that he'd read my *Cleveland Scene* story. "I want to know if you're ready to talk about it."

Vernon was out of the bed like someone had cracked a starter's pistol. Arms wrapped around Singleton, he wept. The words tumbled out. Vernon confessed to Singleton. And in April 2013, in a sworn affidavit taken by the Ohio Innocence Project, he not only admitted he'd lied about witnessing the murder, but he also claimed he had been forced to do so by the police.

Vernon told the lawyers that he'd gone home on May 19, 1975, on his school bus, not earlier as he'd testified. While the bus was pulling up to his stop, Vernon heard gunshots ringing from the Cut-Rate. By the time he rushed over, Franks was gasping his last breaths. He and a friend, Tommy Hall, walked home. Hall told Vernon he knew who did it: "Ricky, Bitzie and Buddy."

Vernon returned to the scene later, and when an officer asked if anyone had information, Vernon offered the boys' names. "I don't exactly know why I went up to the police at first," he said later. "I think I just wanted to

be helpful. You have to understand I was 12 years old at the time. I thought I was doing the right thing."

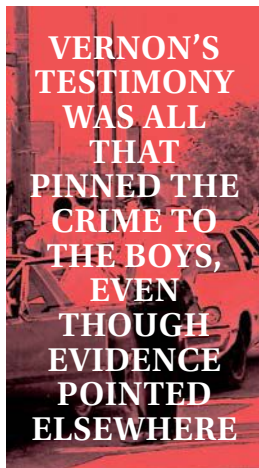
According to Vernon, when detectives spoke with him in the days after

the murder, they gave him details gleaned from other witnesses – the number of assailants, the weapons used, the make and model of the car. After police arrested Ronnie, Wiley, and Ricky, Vernon went to the station to look at a lineup.

He failed to make an ID, and a detective took him into a back room. "He got really loud and angry and started yelling at me and called me a liar," Vernon stated in

his affidavit. "He was slamming his hands on the table and pushing things around, calling me this and that. I was frightened and crying. The detective said that I was too young to go to jail but that he would arrest my parents for perjury because I was backing out. My mother was sick at that time, and that really scared me."

The police wrote a statement, which Vernon signed. After the first trial, he was given a copy of his testimony to study for subsequent hearings. This testimony was all that pinned the murder to Ronnie, Wiley, and Ricky. What's troubling is how much other evidence pointed elsewhere.



The day after the murder, the FBI contacted Cleveland detectives with names from an informant. The list included brothers Arthur and Willie King, who had been tied to earlier stickups. The police also traced a green car matching the description of the getaway vehicle to 23-year-old Ishmael Hixon. A woman from the neighbourhood told police she believed her 16-year-old son, Paul Gardenshire, was involved. Witnesses didn't come through with an ID. But in June 1975, after the arrests, another resident fingered Gardenshire. He claimed that the teen had a .38, the calibre of gun used in the murder, and drove a green car, but he was never charged.

Life Inside

MAD DOESN'T BEGIN to touch it, nor does *angry*. *Despair* doesn't suffice. Use as many synonyms as you want, but words can't cage the feeling: one moment, you're a young man, life stretching ahead. Then you're in a cell. For no reason. When Jackson and the Bridgemans went to prison, each coped in his own way.

Wiley poured himself into his legal case. He won a retrial in 1977 but was again given the same sentence. At one point, he was 20 days away from execution before his sentence was commuted to life in prison. His mental state deteriorated until he was diagnosed with schizophrenia.

In a way, Wiley's breakdown helped save his brother. Kwame focused on his older sibling, worrying about his state and keeping it together for him.

As for Ricky, "I dealt with it badly," he said. "I was acting out, showing aggression, having this I-don't-care attitude." He was racked with anxiety, his blood pressure was high, and a pain chewed at his stomach. It went on for years. What turned him around was the company he was keeping. He saw lifers who had let bitterness burn away everything else. He realised he couldn't let rage sit in the driver's seat. "It was a gradual thing," he told me. "It just didn't hurt as bad. But the truth is, the anger doesn't disappear."

He read all the time. Science fiction was a favourite; it went back to watching *Star Trek* with his stepdad. "As bleak as my reality was, I could always fantasise about the future or pick up a book and be on another planet or be in another time." Ricky also enrolled in classes, and he found a passion for gardening. He liked the whole process – seed to flower, the care and attention and detail – and grew poinsettias for the annual prison sale.

And he maintained his innocence. Five times, he was up for parole. Each time, he'd be considered for release if he admitted what he'd done and expressed remorse. Each time, he'd say he didn't do it. Over the decades, Ricky wrote to organisations that dealt with wrongful incarceration, including the Ohio Innocence Project.

The Ohio Innocence Project operates out of the University of Cincinnati's law school, and it had a file open on Ricky's case for years. Although the law students felt the inmate was innocent, the case lacked a sturdy legal basis. Vernon, however, was a game changer.

In March 2014, the Ohio Innocence Project filed a motion for a new trial with the Cuyahoga County Common Pleas Court on behalf of Ricky Jackson. It argued that Vernon's recantation was evidence that would have changed the original trial. The attorneys also filed a motion for

post-conviction relief on the basis that Jackson's constitutional rights had been violated in 1975 because the defence didn't know about the pressure placed on Vernon to cooperate.

In a letter Ricky sent me in the following months, his response to the news was gut-wrenching. "Honestly, though, I doubt this will ever be over entirely. How do you shake off something that has been a part of your life for so long?" he wrote from prison. "As much as I might long for some semblance of a 'normal life', there are certain realities that I have experienced throughout this whole ordeal that have so profoundly changed the way I look

at everything and everybody, I simply have to accept the fact that I will never be happy or completely whole again. They broke something inside of me."

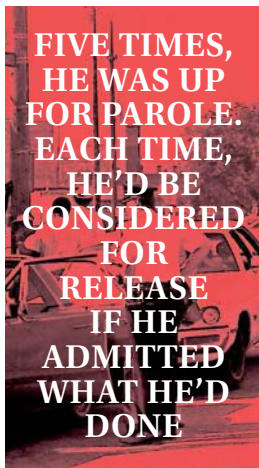
He also knew the odds were against

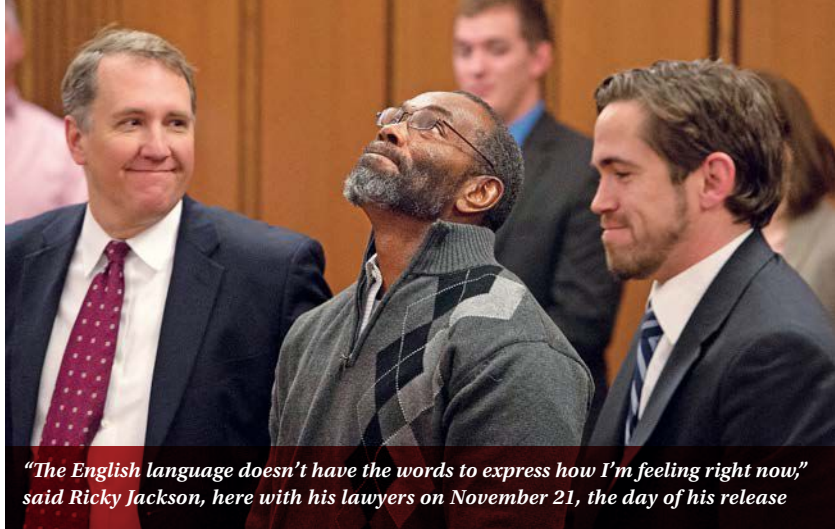
him. Exoneration in wrongful conviction cases is rare: in 2013, 87 people across the US were cleared of crimes. Ohio has an incentive to fight claims since it compensates wrongfully imprisoned individuals some \$40,000 a year, as well as pays their court costs and lost wages; the state is also open to legal action by exonerees.

The Truth Comes Out

IRONICALLY, Ricky's case landed in the courtroom of Richard McMonagle. His father, George McMonagle, had presided over the original 1975 trial. As Judge McMonagle's courtroom filled for Jackson's trial on the morning of November 17, 2014, Vernon – a shrunken man in his 50s – entered. At the defendant's table, Ricky, 57, his hands and feet in chains, watched the witness cross the room to take the stand.

The defence attorney took Vernon through the day of the crime and his encounters with the police. He admitted that he had not seen the crime and had not picked Ricky and





"The English language doesn't have the words to express how I'm feeling right now," said Ricky Jackson, here with his lawyers on November 21, the day of his release

Wiley out of a lineup. After that, he testified, he'd been threatened. "[The detective] said, 'We'll fix it,'" Vernon said, words trickling out between tears. "After that, they took a statement from me that I was scared, that's why I didn't pick them out of the lineup. But I wasn't scared. I didn't pick them out because I knew they didn't do it."

Ricky's attorney, Brian Howe, asked Vernon whether he had seen Ronnie Bridgeman, Wiley Bridgeman, or Ricky Jackson tussling with Franks. No, no, no, answered Vernon.

"How did you feel about testifying about something that you knew wasn't true?" Howe asked.

"I felt really bad about it. Guilty about what I was lying about. I carried all of that," Vernon said.

Ricky's hands were clasped to his face with his eyes shut tight, as the truth was spoken. *Finally*, he thought.

Justice for All

VERNON'S STINT on the stand ended the next day, and the courtroom was largely empty as the clock swung around to 2.15 that Tuesday afternoon. Suddenly, several lawyers from the state marched in with Cuyahoga county prosecutor Tim McGinty bringing up the rear.

"We are waiving final argument on the issue," McGinty began. "The state, in light of the evidence produced by the defence at this hearing, and the total recantation of the key witness, hereby drops our opposition for a motion for a new trial.

"The state concedes the obvious; it is no longer in a position to retry the case. And as all key witnesses that might produce any collateral evidence are no longer living, we do so fully recognising that the result will be the

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PHOTO: PHIL LONG/AP PHOTO

eventual release of Mr Jackson and the other co-defendant [Wiley Bridgeman]. If the court does grant their motion, which we no longer oppose, we will move for a dismissal today."

There was a pause as the words slid into place: Ricky was getting out.

"All right," McMonagle announced. "Mr Jackson, we're going to get you back here on Friday, just so that all the paperwork is done."

"Thank you, sir. Thank you. Thank you," Ricky cried, before burying a sobbing head in his hands. When he came up for air, he shook hands with his legal team. Someone pulled out a phone, asking Ricky who he wanted to call. From memory, he recited Kwame's number. "Hello ... Who is this? ... This is Ricky ... Hey, it's over, man ... It's over, bro, I'm coming home ... Friday, man. Friday. Friday ... Be here to get me. Please ... Let everybody know ... I love you."

On Friday, Kwame worked the pedal

with a heavy foot as he and his wife, LaShawn, drove to Ricky's 9am hearing. He hadn't slept in three days. His brother Wiley had been brought to Cleveland on the judge's order, so he might get out as well.

Inside the courtroom, the guards led in Ricky Jackson. A smile spread across his face, revealing perfect white teeth. "Life is full of small victories," Judge McMonagle said before closing Ricky's legal case. "This is a big one."

An hour later, Wiley Bridgeman walked free as well.

Ricky paced the holding cell as paperwork was stamped. More waiting in a lifetime of waiting. He didn't know it, but 16 floors below, cameras and reporters clogged the hall where he'd soon take his first free steps. According to the National Registry of Exonerations, Jackson's 39 years is the longest wrongful incarceration term to end in release in American history.

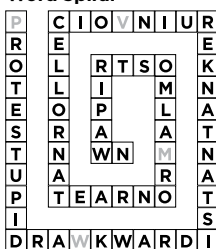
The three boys from Arthur Avenue met at a nearby hotel, all together for the first time in 39 years. Now men, they embraced. Kwame's wife, LaShawn, stepped forward. "Hey there, brother," she said before hugging Ricky.

That night, although they were all exhausted, they drove around the city until 2am. They rolled through their old neighbourhood, including Arthur Avenue, abandoned now and drowned in shadow. For Ricky, it was like sci-fi, like getting off one of those ships in *Star Trek*, confronting a strange new world. **R**

Puzzles

See page 120

Word Spiral



Phrase Worthy

A broad accent

Value for Money

Betty should pay John \$24: \$2 for every dot on the three unseen sides of the die.

Word Play

River

Hidden Meaning

- A. Short of dough
- B. Fair and square
- C. A stitch in time

Smart Animals



Pets are renowned for communicating in their own special ways, as these smart animals prove

Medical Attention Please

ANITA DE LANGE, *Cradock, Eastern Cape*

Last year, my one-year-old ginger cat Django had his first trip to the local vet to get vaccinated. My mother and I keep about a dozen cats on our farm as they help to keep rats and snakes at bay. Yet Django seems to

be the one cat that is always in some kind of trouble or unholy mischief.

About six months after his vet visit, I was heading into town when I noticed Django was lying in wait on the back seat of our car where we usually placed the animal transport cage on trips to the vet. As my

mother and I removed Django from the car, we noticed that he had a slight limp. As he seemed fine otherwise, we didn't think much of it and set off for the day.

The following day we noticed that Django's limp had worsened and on closer inspection we discovered he had a deep wound to his right hind leg. He must have been in a fight.

It was then that it suddenly dawned on us: by waiting in the backseat of the car, Django was surely trying his best to get to the vet.

Impatient Poodle

LESA DONNELLY

Years ago I adopted Baboo, a poodle cross. He was in the car with me one day when I parked and went into a shop. While I was in the shop, I could hear a horn honking but didn't pay great attention to it – until I came back to my car. A crowd had gathered around the vehicle, watching as an impatient Baboo set off the horn in an attempt to hurry me along.

Knock, Knock!

VANESSA KELLY

Some ten years ago, I had a pretty little female rescue cat named Abby.

Despite being very resourceful, for some reason she didn't like using the cat flap on the back door. Instead, Abby preferred to go to the front

door, and using her paw, she'd pull the metal strip that was coming away from the wood to 'knock' the door. Each time she 'knocked' I would open the door and Abby would wander in.

Most people needed to see this with their own eyes before believing me. My three granddaughters thought it was hilarious as I

would have to get up every time just in case it was a visitor.

Birding on Demand

MIKKI PETERICK

One spring, I spent about 20 minutes trying to take a photo of a chestnut-sided warbler. I tried and tried, but couldn't seem to get a good shot. Just when I was about to give up, I said, "Little bird! Come here, so I can take your picture." As if on cue, the bird flew right then and landed within five feet of me. I was so excited that the warbler did what I asked that I almost missed my shot!

You could earn cash by telling us about the antics of unique pets or wildlife. Turn to page 6 for details on how to contribute to the magazine.

MOVIE DIGEST



THE MAN FROM U.N.C.L.E

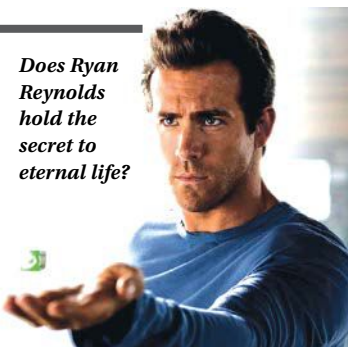
Spy-Fi/Comedy

Based on the 1964 television series, *The Man From U.N.C.L.E* transports us back to the swinging '60s and the height of the Cold War. When a mysterious international crime organisation threatens to cause havoc through the proliferation of nuclear weapons, CIA agent Napoleon Solo (Henry Cavill, left) and KGB agent Ilya Kuryakin (Armie Hammer, right) are forced to put aside their longstanding differences to prevent a worldwide catastrophe. Directed by Guy Ritchie and fuelled by a fast-paced storyline, with hilarious one-liners and cameo appearances from the likes of Hugh Grant, this film is a must-see for both old fans and newcomers.

SELF/LESS *Sci-Fi/Thriller*

It doesn't pay to be the richest man in the graveyard. Or does it? In this unconventional sci-fi thriller, a terminally ill billionaire (Ben Kingsley) buys a chance for immortality through an experimental medical procedure, which transfers his consciousness into the body of a younger man (Ryan Reynolds). However, when some disturbing side effects kick in, the dream of eternal life turns into a nightmare.

Does Ryan Reynolds hold the secret to eternal life?

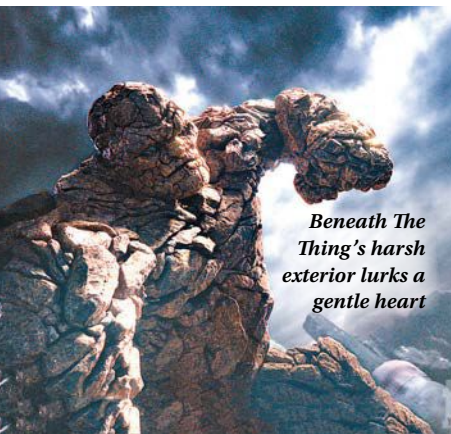




Friends Cara Delevingne and Nat Wolff try to reconnect

PAPER TOWNS *Romance*

If this film adaptation of author John Green's novel is as successful as his first ("The Fault in Our Stars"), then we could soon see a lot of his work in the cinemas. This coming-of-age story focuses on two mystery-loving teens, Quentin and Margo. When Margo disappears, Quentin and his friends set out to decipher her clues in an attempt to find her. What unravels is an upbeat adventure with plenty of laughs thanks in part to Quentin's teen logic. It's a film about finding yourself and, as such, one that any age will enjoy.



Beneath The Thing's harsh exterior lurks a gentle heart

FANTASTIC FOUR *Action*

The Fantastic Four are back. After two blockbusters based on the Marvel legacy flopped in the early 2000s, 20th Century Fox have rebooted the franchise with a whole new direction and cast. When a teleportation experiment goes awry, four young scientists achieve superhuman abilities after being exposed to cosmic radiation. But when an uprising tyrant threatens the fate of the earth, the Fantastic Four must harness their new powers to save the human race. With promises of breathtaking special effects and a modern twist on a classic, perhaps *Fantastic Four* will prove that third time's a charm.

Q: *In what one city must a movie play to be eligible for an Oscar?*

Sell an Oscar, Gain a Lawsuit

Family members of the Hollywood elite (or their cash-strapped heirs) may want to reconsider the idea of selling their Oscar trophies to make some quick cash.

In July 2014, the Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences filed a lawsuit against the heirs of the 1942 Oscar winner Joseph Wright, as well as auction house Briarbrook Auctions, for selling his award. Wright won the Oscar for his work on colour and art direction in *My Gal Sal* (1942) and his family sold the golden statuette to an anonymous buyer for US\$79,200.

According to the Academy, winners sign a contract that prohibits them from selling or disposing of the golden statuette without offering the academy a right of first refusal to purchase it for a sum of \$1.

Although Wright won his award before these contracts were introduced, the Academy claims that it should receive compensatory damages that exceed the selling price of the trophy and has also offered to buy it back for the modest price of \$10.

A: Los Angeles



BOOK DIGEST



*"Elegans Prism"
contains insects
from Malaysia,
Indonesia and
Japan*

In **BIOPHILIA** (Abrams), **Christopher Marley** presents his tribute to living things and the joy that they bring, in the form of exquisite works of art: "... It is because we are a part of nature that we innately love it. And when we begin to see natural elements that relate to one another visually, as disparate as they may be, it is enthralling precisely because it reinforces the fact that we also belong. Our love of nature is not just a starstruck crush or a hopelessly unrequited pursuit."

In **UNPLUCKED**

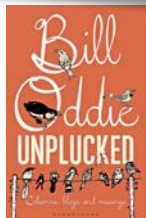
(Bloomsbury) entertainer and bird enthusiast **Bill Oddie** writes:

"... Show-business people talk about first nights.

Birdwatchers talk about first

mornings. Here is a classic scenario. You have gone abroad for a holiday to somewhere new. You arrived at the hotel, lodge or resort in the evening when it was dark. This may be a little frustrating, but it is also tantalising. What is it going to be like out there when you can see and hear?

"Over the years, I have had a few surprises when the sun came up! My best first morning ever? Rather bizarrely, it was at a 'Dude' Ranch in Arizona. As soon as I sensed a glimmer of light, I slipped outside into what was in effect a giant rock garden. A small-scale version of the true Arizona desert. There were cactus wrens everywhere. There were woodpeckers, Gambel's quails, warblers, flycatchers, orioles, sparrows, shrikes and raptors. As I ambled down the path, the species revealed themselves one by one. I rifled through the field guide over breakfast, and announced that I had seen more than 20 'lifers', including my first roadrunner."

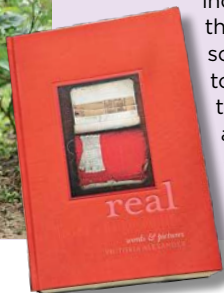


PHOTOS: GETTY IMAGES; THINKSTOCK: EXTRACTS MAY BE EDITED FOR SPACE AND CLARITY



Victoria Alexander writes in **REAL: LIVING A BALANCED LIFE** (Murdoch Books),

"... Loyalty blossoms when there is trust, respect, a sense of fairness, equality and recognition of each other's interests and needs. Firm arrangements make for firm friendships. The real world is an incredibly rich and varied place, throbbing with treasures, beautiful souls and interesting people, a place to share. Everyone has a story. Listen to others; speak the truth quietly and clearly. Don't bother comparing yourself to others. The best friendships are a harmony made of equality."

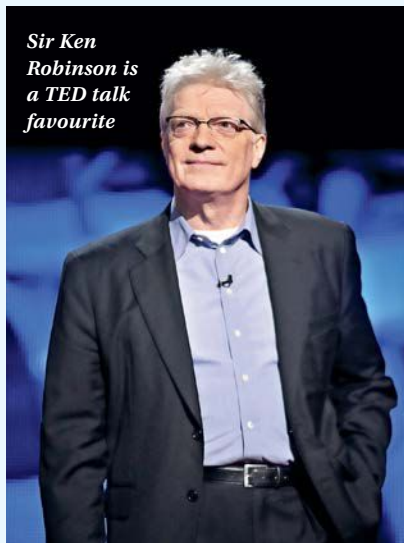


Ken Robinson, in **CREATIVE SCHOOLS: REVOLUTIONIZING EDUCATION FROM THE GROUND UP** (Allen Lane):

"... In 2006 I gave a talk at a TED conference in California called "Do Schools Kill Creativity?" The essence of that talk was that we're all born with immense natural talents, but by the time we've been through education far too many of us have lost touch with them. As I put it then, many highly talented, brilliant people think they're not because the thing they were good at in school wasn't valued or was actually stigmatised. The consequences are disastrous for individuals and for the health of our communities.

"It has proven to be the most watched talk in the history of TED. It has been viewed online more than 30 million times and has been seen by an estimated 300 million people worldwide. I know that's not as many views as Miley Cyrus gets. But I don't twerk."

Sir Ken Robinson is a TED talk favourite



The average person checks their smart phone 150 times a day:

A black smartphone is shown with a white screen displaying a list of app usage statistics. A finger is pointing at the 'Social media 9' entry. The screen also shows a status bar at the top with signal strength, time (12:00), and battery level. At the bottom, there are three capacitive touch icons: back, home, and recent apps.

Messaging **23**
Voice call related **22**
Clock **18**
Music player **13**
Gaming **12**
Social media **9**
Alarm **8**
Camera **8**
News and alerts **6**
Calendar **5**
Search **3**
Web browsing **3**
Charging **3**
Voicemail **1**
Misc **10**

Tomi Ahonen's Mobile Almanac, quoted by **George Berkowski** in **HOW TO BUILD A BILLION DOLLAR APP** (Piatkus)

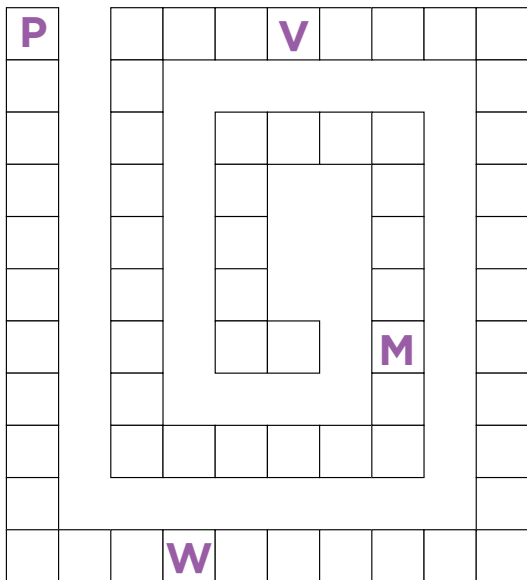
"...Autumn is when bees set up their hive and ready themselves for winter; it's also the last chance for honey harvesting."

Doug Purdie in **BACKYARD BEES** (Murdoch Books)

TEST YOUR MENTAL PROWESS

Puzzles

Challenge yourself by solving these puzzles and mind stretchers, then check your answers on page 111



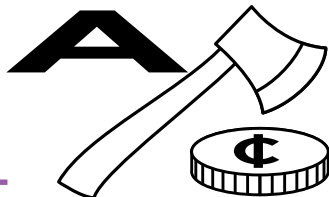
Word Spiral

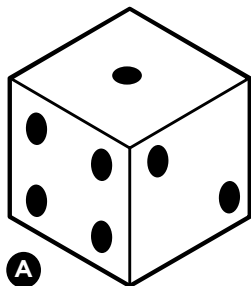
Work your way into the centre of the grid. Words overlap, with the last one or two letters of each answer starting the next word. There are a few hints to keep you on the right track.

- 1 Objection (7)
- 2 Idiotic (6)
- 3 Dead heat (4)
- 4 Clumsy (7)
- 5 Remote (7)
- 6 Oil ship (6)
- 7 Wreck (4)
- 8 Bill (7)
- 9 Stringed instrument (5)
- 10 Heavily decorated (6)
- 11 Deserve (4)
- 12 Ordinary (6)
- 13 Nearly (6)
- 14 Stumble (4)
- 15 Chess piece (4)

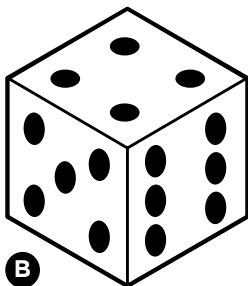
Phrase Worthy

Can you decipher this rebus? The answer is a well-known expression.

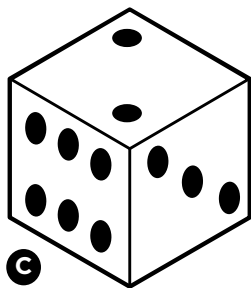




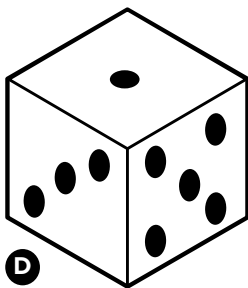
A



B



C



D

Value for Money

When Robert threw die A, Betty paid him \$28; when Karen threw die B, Betty paid her \$12; and when Helen threw die C, Betty paid her \$20. How much should Betty pay John, who threw die D?

What can run, but never walks; has a mouth but never talks?

Word Play

Can you solve this brainteaser for a common word?

Hidden Meaning

Identify the common words or phrases below.

RE MI FA SO LA TI

A

B

BLONDE

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

C

HOPURLUR

Trivia

1. What bony body part is the patella better known as? **1 point**

2. Which two South American countries are named after people? **2 points**

3. Of the four arenas at which grand slam tennis finals are played, the US and Australian courts are named after tennis players and the French is for a WWI fighter pilot. What are they called? **3 points**

4. Ronald Reagan, Aretha Franklin and Stanley Kubrick (*right*) and all suffered from pteromerhanophobia, or fear of what? **1 point**

5. To which animal class does the dolphin belong? **1 point**

6. Which music style and culture takes its name from a mythological nymph known mainly from Homer's *Odyssey*? **1 point**

7. What is the difference between a meteoroid and a meteorite? **1 point**

8. What popular drink's name was originally derived from the leaves and nuts that flavoured it? **1 point**

9. Arctophilists are collectors of what night-time staple? **1 point**

10. Name four of the seven Von Trapp children from *The Sound of Music*. **2 points**

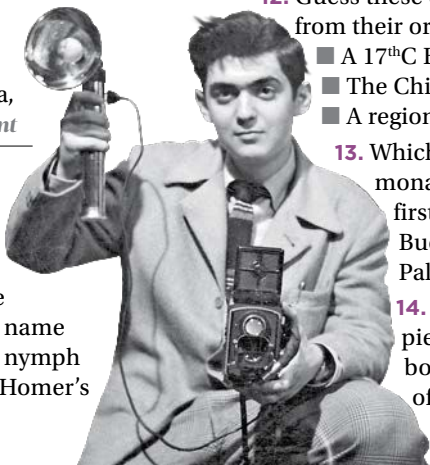
11. Relating to the sea, what are spring and neap? **1 point**

12. Guess these dog breeds from their origins. **3 points**

- A 17th C British king
- The Chinese capital
- A region of Mexico

13. Which British monarch was the first to live in Buckingham Palace? **1 point**

14. How many pieces are on the board at the start of a chess game? **1 point**



16-20 Gold medal

11-15 Silver medal

6-10 Bronze medal

0-5 Wooden spoon

ANSWERS: 1. Kneecap. 2. Bolivia (Simon Bolívar); Colombia (Christopher Columbus). 3. Billie Jean King National Tennis Center, Rod Laver Arena, Le Stade Roland Garros. 4. Flying. 5. Mammalia. 6. Calypso. 7. A meteorite is a meteoroid that some piece of has survived impact with Earth. 8. Coca-Cola. 9. Teddy bears. 10. Brigitte, Gretl, Liesl, Louisa, Marta. 11. Kneecap. 12. King Charles spaniel; pekingese; chihuahua. 13. Queen Victoria. 14. 32.

CAPITULATE

IT PAYS TO INCREASE YOUR

Word Power

Spell Check

They're the words we trot out when we need to show a bit of flair, but how many of us know how to spell them? Or even what they actually mean? Test your words' worth with this month's Word Power Quiz. See next page for answers.

C: start a new sentence.

6. lassitude *n.* –

A: femininity.

B: permanence.

C: lethargy.

7. mercurial *adj.* –

A: running errands.

B: obscured.

C: quick to change.

8. prodigal *adj.* –

A: spending unwisely.

B: giving unwanted advice.

C: arrogant.

9. discern *v.* –

A: detect.

B: have trouble understanding.

C: get rid of.

10. volatile *adj.* –

A: reactive.

B: willing.

C: spoken aloud.

11. flamboyant *adj.* –

A: showy. B: young and foolish.

C: on fire.

12. fandango *n.* –

A: wild dog. B: lively dance.

C: spectator.

13. eradicate *v.* –

A: plant deeply.

B: destroy completely.

C: bring to light.

14. fusillade *n.* –

A: candlewick.

B: barrage of shots.

C: strong glue.

15. campestral *adj.* –

A: of open fields.

B: toward evening.

C: buggy.

1. dearth *n.* –

A: fireplace. B: value.

C: shortage.

2. askew *adv.* –

A: open and breezy.

B: like jam. C: crooked.

3. egregious *adj.* –

A: very bad. B: very small.

C: fond of company.

4. infinitesimal *adj.* –

A: uncountable.

B: of prime numbers.

C: tiny.

5. capitulate *v.* –

A: surrender.

B: amass lots of cash.

SPELLING FOR SMARTY-PANTS

When you spell correctly, you're practising **orthography**. A word with Greek roots: ortho is "correct" as in orthodox ("right opinion"); -graphy means "writing" as found in biography ("life writing") and geography ("writing of the earth").

Answers

1. dearth – [C] shortage.

“There is a dearth of Darth Vader costumes at this convention.”

2. askew – [C] crooked.

“Nigel, before you go to the wedding, let me fix your tie; it’s askew.”

3. egregious – [A] very bad. “Your behaviour, sir, is reprehensible and egregious.”

4. infinitesimal – [C] tiny. “When we say we’re perfect, we don’t count infinitesimal flaws.”

5. capitulate – [A] surrender. “Don’t capitulate to his whims – stick to your guns.”

6. lassitude – [C] lethargy. “An adolescent in the morning is a case study in lassitude.”

7. mercurial – [C] quick to change. “Her mercurial taste in clothes keeps everyone guessing.”

8. prodigal – [A] spending unwisely. “Since winning the lottery, he’s been a prodigal fool.”

9. discern – [A] detect. “Squinting through the spyglass, I was able to discern a pirate ship.”

10. volatile – [A] reactive. “Be careful; Nick has rather a volatile temper.”

11. flamboyant – [A] showy. “Oscar Wilde was nothing if not flamboyant.”

12. fandango – [B] lively dance. “After a touchdown, it’s not necessary to



dance a fandango in the end zone.”

13. eradicate – [B] destroy completely. “To eradicate my termites, I’ve purchased an aardvark.”

14. fusillade – [B] barrage of shots. “A fusillade of hailstones crashed onto our windshield.”

15. campestral – [A] of open fields. “Even the most devoted city lovers can appreciate the beauty of a campestral milieu.”

FIND THE MISTAKES!

Here are eight words from this year’s US Scripps National Spelling Bee. Are they all correct, or have we misspelled one or more?

gesundheit	surveillance
trattoria	belligerant
brewhaha	poinsettia
inocuous	sarsaparilla

Answer: We misspelled three of the words: brouhaha, innocuous, and belligerent.

VOCABULARY RATINGS

5 & below: Classic communicator

6–10: Lexicon lover

11–12: Logography lunatic

13–15: Word Power wizard

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